April 17, 1995

THE NEW YORKER

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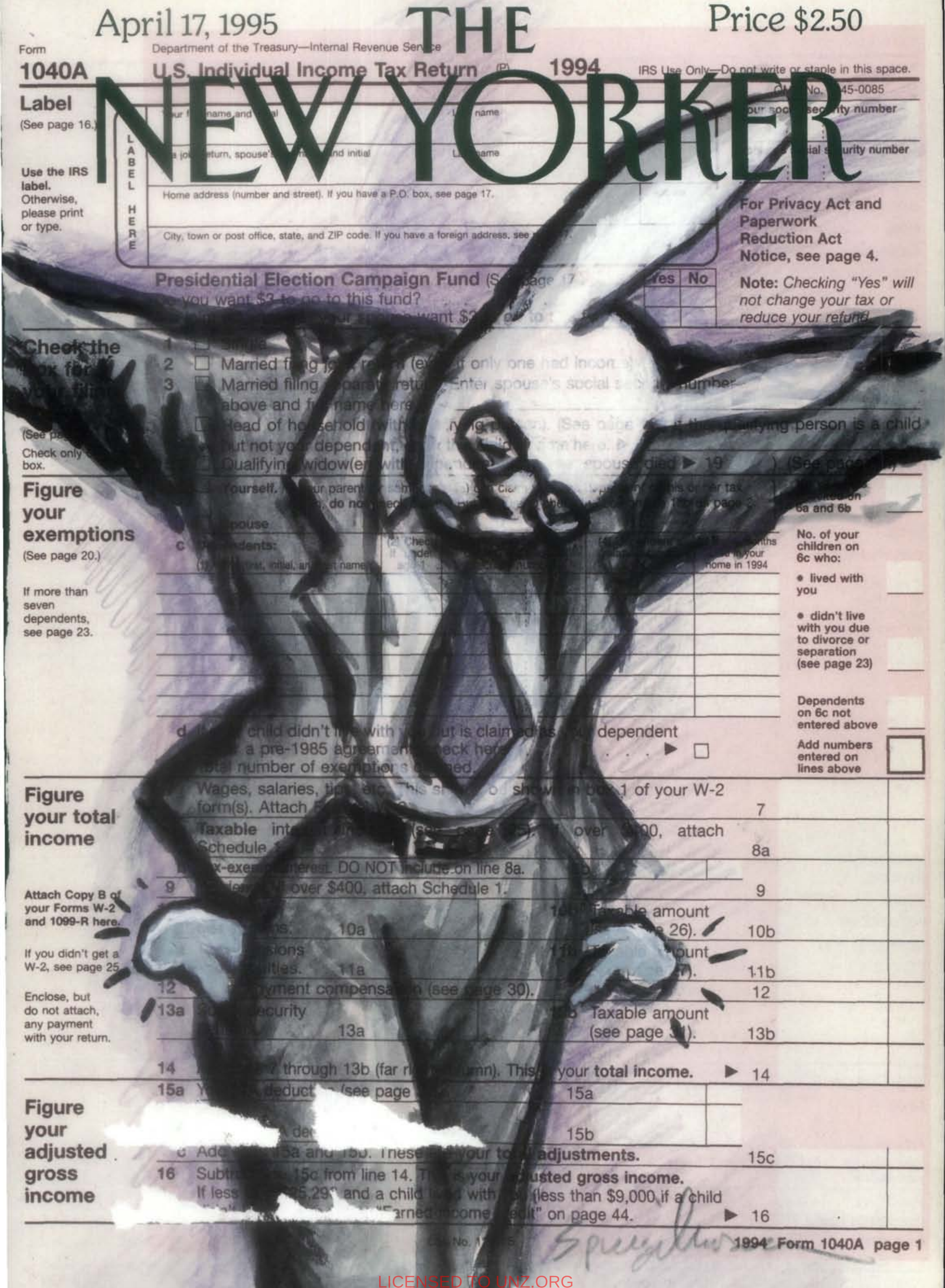
Form
1040A
Department of the Treasury—Internal Revenue Service
U.S. Individual Income Tax Return
1994
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(See page 16.)
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Spouse's social security number
Use the IRS label.
Otherwise, please print or type.
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City, town or post office, state, and ZIP code. If you have a foreign address, see page 17.
For Privacy Act and Paperwork Reduction Act Notice, see page 4.
Presidential Election Campaign Fund (See page 17.)
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No
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(See page 17.)
Check only one box.
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2 Married filing joint return (even if only one had income)
3 Married filing separate return. Enter spouse's social security number above and full name here.
4 Head of household (with qualifying person). (See page 18.) If the qualifying person is a child but not your dependent, enter this child's name here.
5 Qualifying widow(er) with dependent child (year spouse died ▶ 19). (See page 19.)
Figure your exemptions
(See page 20.)
If more than seven dependents, see page 23.
Yourself.
Spouse
c Dependents:
No. of boxes checked on 6a and 6b
No. of your children on 6c who:
• lived with you
• didn't live with you due to divorce or separation (see page 23)
Dependents on 6c not entered above
Add numbers entered on lines above
d If your child didn't live with you but is claimed as your dependent under a pre-1985 agreement, check here ▶ ☐
Figure your total income
7 Wages, salaries, tips, etc. This should be shown in box 1 of your W-2 form(s). Attach Form(s) W-2.
8a Taxable interest income (see page 25). If over $400, attach Schedule 1.
b Tax-exempt interest. DO NOT include on line 8a.
9 Dividends. If over $400, attach Schedule 1.
Attach Copy B of your Forms W-2 and 1099-R here.
If you didn't get a W-2, see page 25.
10a
10b Taxable amount (see page 26).
11a
11b Taxable amount (see page 27).
Enclose, but do not attach, any payment with your return.
12 Unemployment compensation (see page 30).
13a Social security benefits.
13b Taxable amount (see page 31).
14 Add lines 7 through 13b (far right column). This is your total income. ▶ 14
15a Your IRA deduction (see page 33).
15b Spouse's IRA deduction
c Add lines 15a and 15b. These are your total adjustments.
15c
Figure your adjusted gross income
16 Subtract line 15c from line 14. This is your adjusted gross income. If less than $25,296 and a child lived with you (less than $9,000 if a child didn't live with you), see "Earned Income Credit" on page 44.
▶ 16
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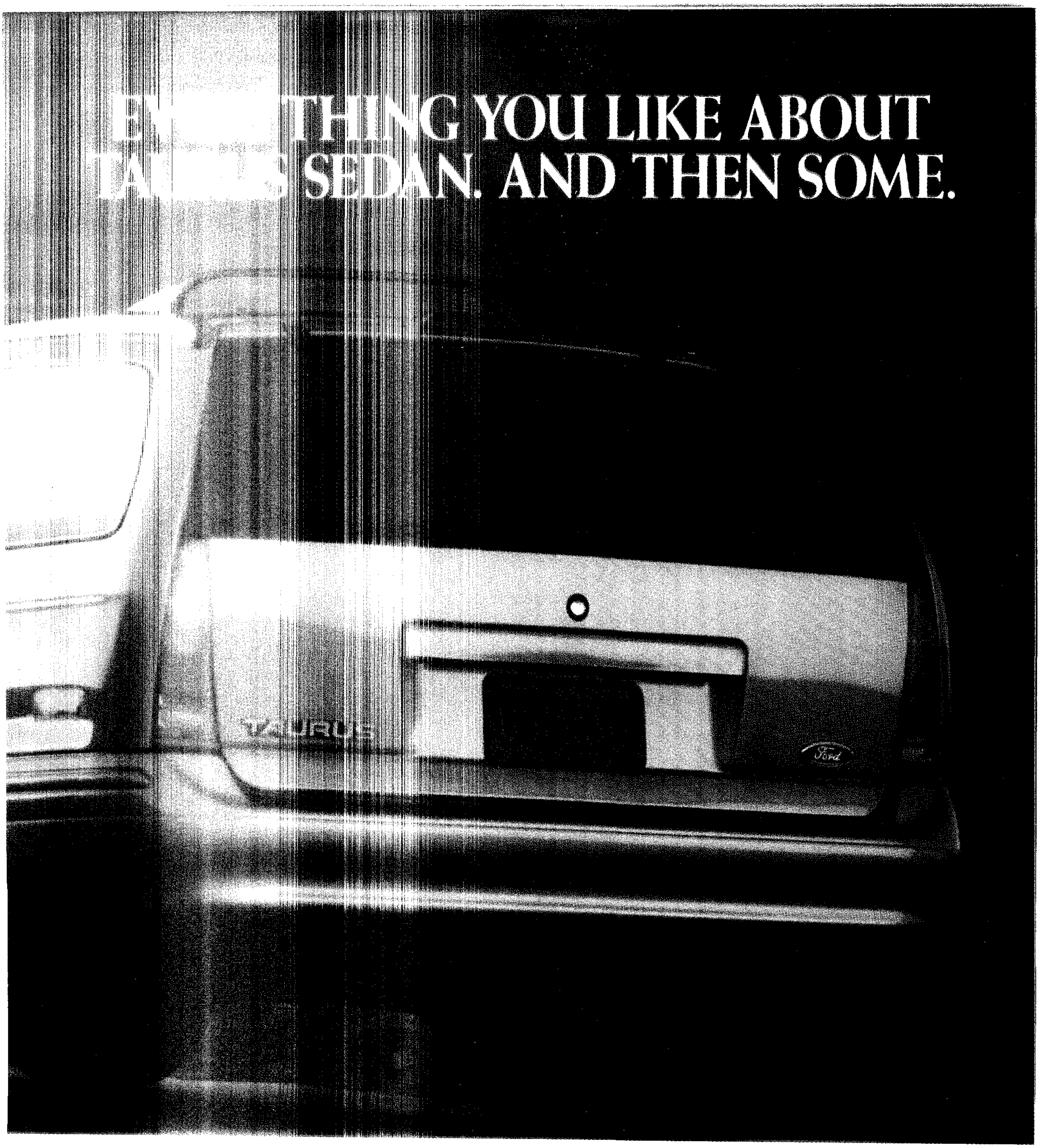

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APRIL 17, 1995

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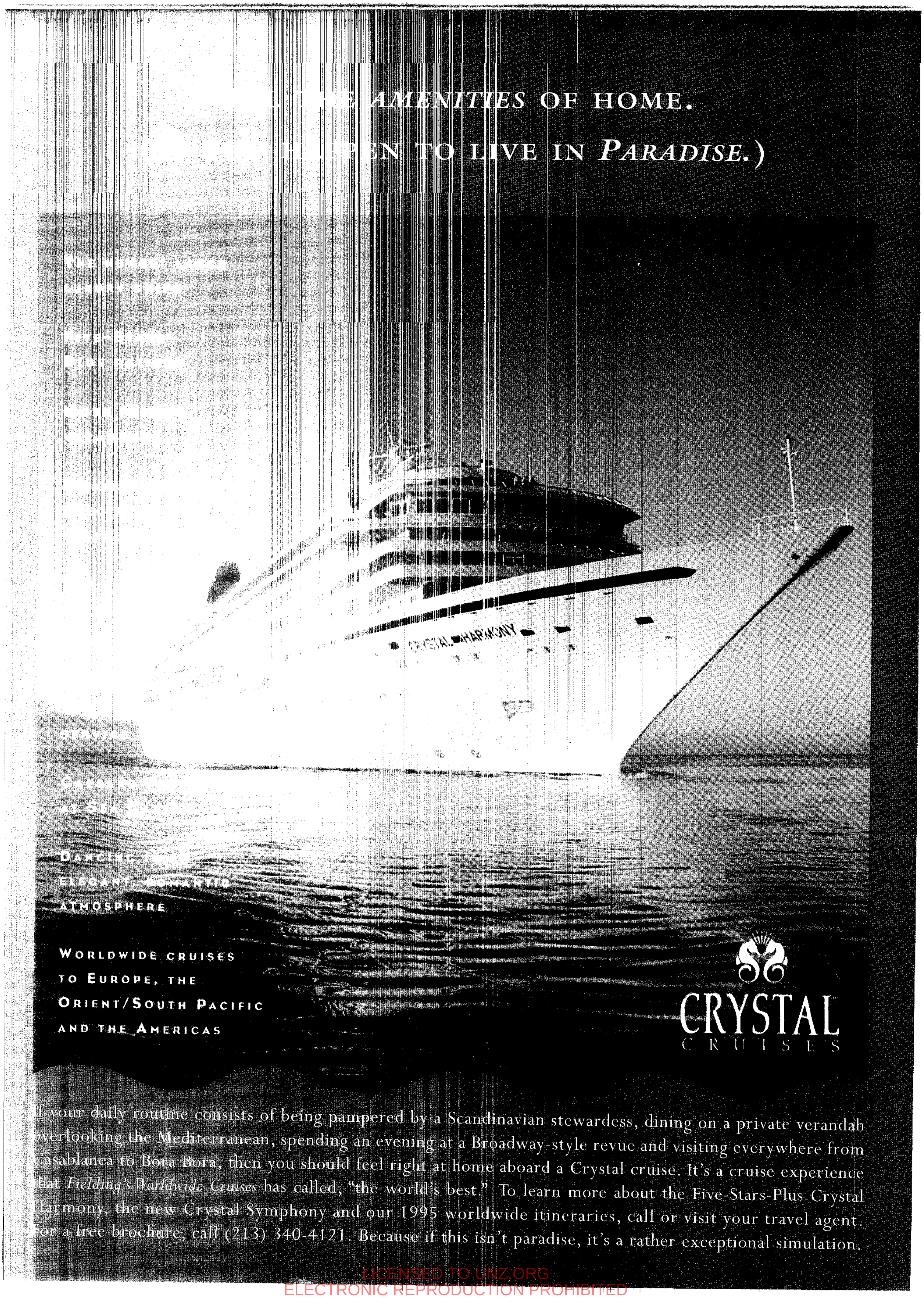

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COMMENT

SPEAKER'S DOZEN

Perhaps term limits wouldn't be so awfully awful.

WHEN term limits fizzled in the House of Representatives the other day, thereby becoming one of only two duds in Speaker Newt Gingrich's hundred-day fireworks display (the other was the balanced budget amendment), right-thinking people were much gratified. "A VICTORY FOR GOOD SENSE" is how the *Times* headlined its editorial, the text of which, savoring the thought, pronounced the rejection "a triumph of wisdom." A few days earlier, the editorialists of the Washington *Post*, under the headline "THE TERM-LIMITS SCAM," had written, "Term limits are a terrible idea, and there will be no mourning in this space if they fail." They did, and there was none.

Those who fret that our elected representatives have become slaves to opinion polls now have a counter-example to take comfort in. Surveys consistently show that the idea of limiting the terms of members of the national legislature is favored by anywhere from two-thirds to four-fifths of the American people—poll numbers that would normally be large enough to concentrate the minds of those same legislators. In this instance, though, in fine Burkean fashion, they consulted their consciences instead. Four different versions of a term-limit constitutional amendment—the most popular would have limited senators and representatives to twelve consecutive years of office-holding—went down to defeat, one after another. This was not wildly surprising. (Would a college faculty pass a resolution denouncing tenure?) But the idea of term limits will not go away; it's much too popular for that. Nor, come to think of it, is it such a terrible idea. It's actually quite a good one.

Not, however, for the reasons usually advanced by its most active proponents, nearly all of whom are anti-government zealots of one stripe or another—Gingrichian Republicans, talk-radio populists, at-loose-ends Perotistas. In their view, the country is afflicted with a class of parasites—"career politicians," who devote their lives to perpetuating themselves in office by spending the people's money. A congressman's length of service correlates with a tendency, in the words of Charles T. Canady, Republican of Florida, who made the

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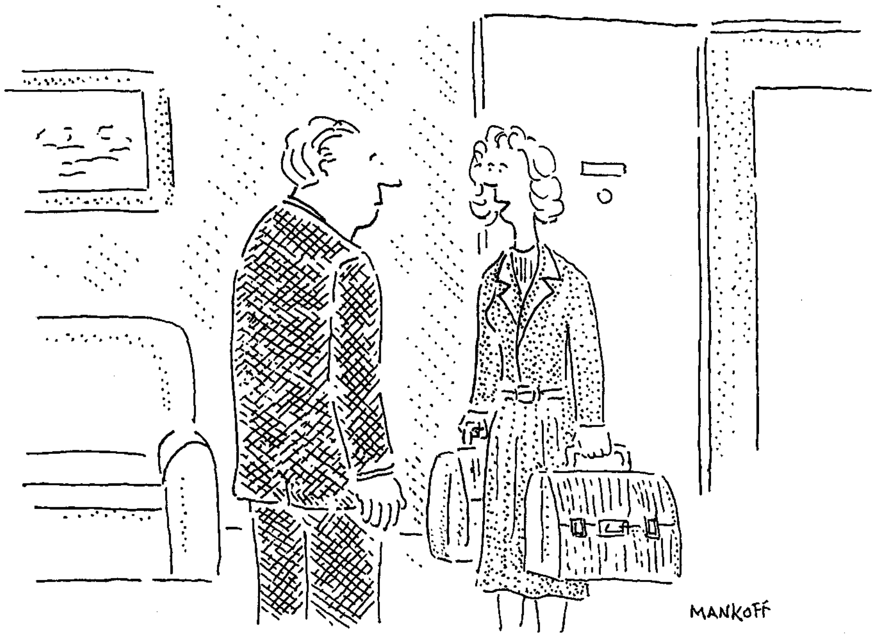

"Look, I've tried quiet diplomacy to gain my freedom, but it just hasn't worked."

• •

opening speech in the House floor debate, "to think that the power of the federal government can be used to solve every problem." Term limits, writes George F. Will, would "transform Washington's culture of spending."

Actually, there's no obvious reason term limits should make Congress more receptive to conservative bromides, such as a reflexive opposition to government programs, than to liberal ones, such as a reflexive belief in them. The fact that term limits are a mostly conservative and Republican enthusiasm is an artifact of the Democrats' forty-year stranglehold on the House, broken last November.

Opponents of term limits claim that they are undemocratic, because, to quote Senator Mitch McConnell, a Kentucky Republican, they would "restrict the freedom of voters to elect whomever they please." Not by much, though. The maximum number of potential candidates a term limit could disqualify for a given seat is one, and that rarely; as it is, age and residency requirements disqualify hundreds of millions. And in more important ways term limits are anything but undemocratic.

"We already have term limits," goes the supposedly most withering argument against the idea, flourished over and over during the House debate. "They're called elections." What we generally don't have, however, is *competitive* elections. The Republican Party did well in the last election, but not nearly so well as the Incumbent Party: a near-Brezhnevian ninety-one per cent of the incumbent House candidates were reëlected. Sixty-four per cent of the "races" were decided by margins of twenty points or higher, which is to say that their outcomes were never in doubt. Is it any wonder that in the most one-sided districts three-quarters or more of the potential electorate decided not to bother voting?

The best remedy for the chronic nonparticipation that our political system induces would be to junk the single-member-district, winner-take-all scheme we inherited from the British and replace it with some form of proportional representation, such as exists in the great majority of the world's democracies. Pending that unlikely development, term limits, especially if they were to be combined with reforms in campaign financing, would help. At a minimum, they would give every voter a fighting chance of participating now and then in a genuinely *political* election—that is, in an election that would turn not on the goodies that old Congressman Jones has procured for the district but on the competing political visions and programs of parties and candidates. Under current arrangements, you have to be either heartless or thoughtless to vote against a long-sitting representative—one who brings jobs and money to your district—just because you happen to disagree with him or her about national issues. After all, if you do manage to bring him or her down, you will change the ideological complexion of the House by a mere two-tenths of one per cent—a benefit both notional and negligible compared with the palpable cost of beggaring your neighbors. The problem is not individual incumbents but chronic incumbency; and trying to solve it by removing your own incumbent is like trying to cure arthritis in your fingers by trimming your fingernails.

A twelve-year limit would finish off the much reformed but still pervasive and undemocratic regime of seniority within Congress. The potentates of Capitol Hill, such as the chairmen of important committees, are elevated by a decades-long, quasi-feudal process of favor-trading, personal-alliance-building, ladder-climbing, and seat-warming. Term limits would leave Congress little choice but to pick its chiefs democratically, on the basis of the policies and the leadership qualities of the candidates. And a regular infusion of new leadership in both houses of Congress—one who served more than six years would be a rarity—would be a spur to brisk accomplishment, as Speaker Gingrich has just spent a hundred days demonstrating.

The seniority system occasionally produces good leaders as well as bad ones, but there is no denying that it is grossly biased in favor of the most politically torpid parts of the nation. A swing district—one marked by close elections and the robust participation that close elections bring—has a hard time keeping somebody in office long enough to take advantage of the glacial process by which congressional power is accumulated. With relentless efficiency, the seniority system empowers the country's most politically sluggish precincts at the expense of its politically more lively ones. That is perverse.

The term-limit idea at least has the virtue of recognizing, however dimly, that there are systemic explanations as well as moral ones for our collective woes. It's hardly the dangerous folly it has been made out to be. But a few more elections like the last one may be required before the liberal Democrats who are the idea's most determined opponents can be persuaded that it deserves another look.

—HENDRIK HERTZBERG

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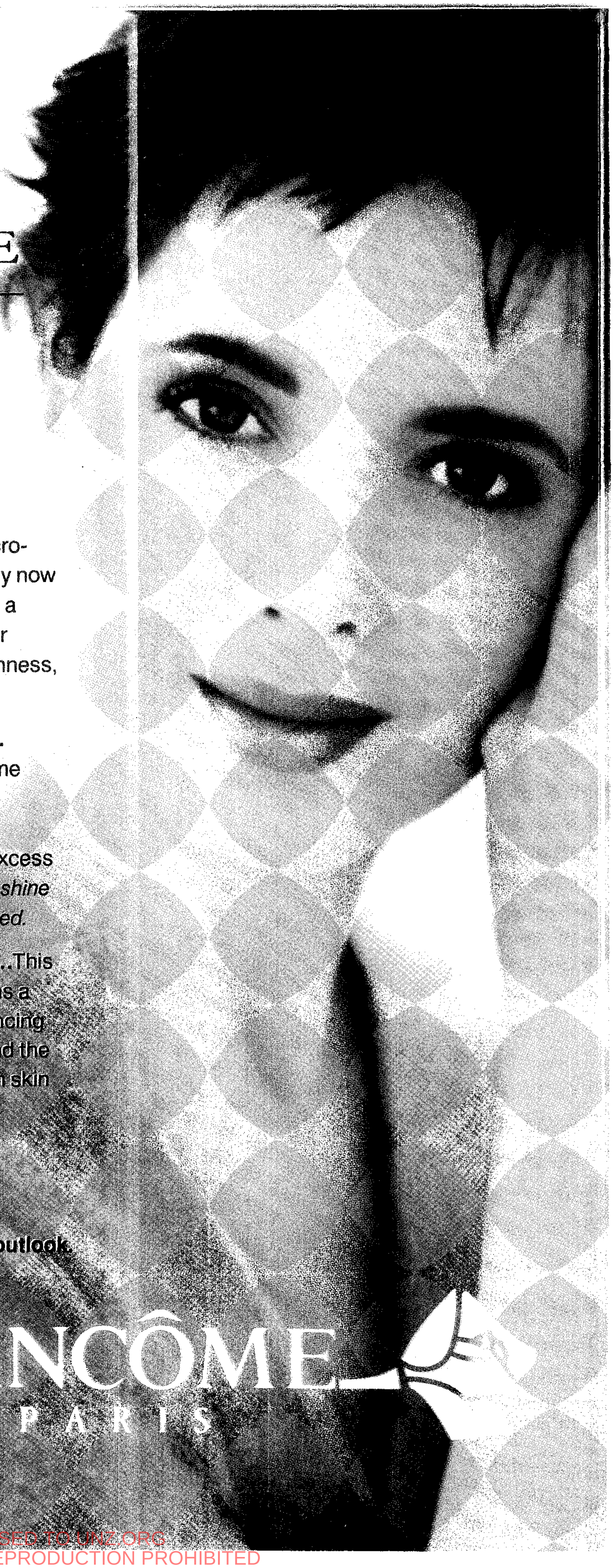

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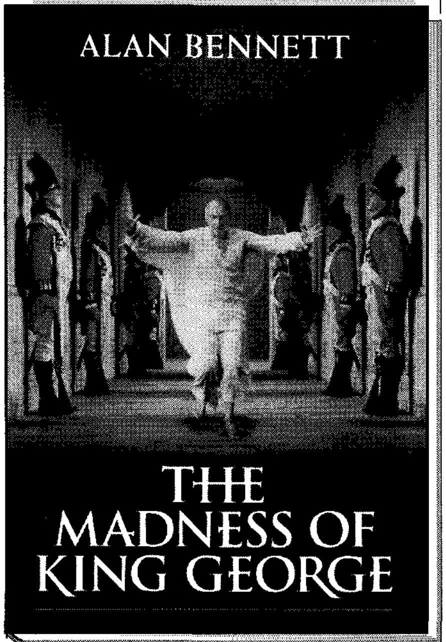
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IN THE MAIL

WHO SHOULD WATCH THE KIDS?

In "The Nanny Track" (March 6th) Susan Cheever gives a perceptive description of the economic and emotional conflicts that make Manhattan nannies and parents keep their distance; she takes pains to view the nanny-parent relationship from both sides and to admit her own shortcomings as an employer.

But in assessing the reasons for hiring a nanny in the first place she is not equally fair-minded. Comparing one Upper East Side mother's choice to leave her children and the similar choice her nanny made is disingenuous. And it is not credible to imply that the mother's choice to work is forced; she may not like her options, but she must know that some exist. In summary, Cheever's statement that her generation "has made a religion of parenting" is puzzling: can she be serious, or are we to see parents as the faithful who show up once a year, dressed for the big holiday? To parents who have acted on their beliefs and made the choice to live on less money during their children's early years and also to risk the hurdles of Mommy/Daddy tracks, her protestations have an empty ring. It's hard to hear about all those extra-long workdays and sympathize.

It is easy, however, to feel sad about the way that fathers' non-participation, once Cheever has noted it, drops out of sight without a ripple. Until we—men and women—reject the still well-entrenched notion that fathers and mothers do not have equal parenting rights and responsibilities, we can hardly expect families to endure.

ANN F. MILLER
Wayne, Pa.

I have long maintained in my work as a nanny that as much as my job entails taking care of and educating children, it involves taking care of and educating parents even more. Nannies, whether society will acknowledge it or not, are very important people. We are raising a big part of the next generation. If you as a parent have already decided you don't want to raise your own children, then let us do our job. You can't have it both ways: you can't entrust your children to another person's care and then be surprised when your children look to that person rather than to you for values, judgments, and a world view.

SHEILA MARIE JENCA
Los Angeles, Calif.

During the two years that I was a live-in nanny in Manhattan, I was a "member of the family" (read: expected to work around the clock) and was given the "opportunity to travel" (read: share a hotel room with three small children while parents do the town). I was showered with gifts of clothing and tips about losing weight (read: we don't like the way you look). I was given my own cozy room in the basement so I could have privacy (read: we have no other use for that dank, dark space that floods all winter). At the end of the week, I was left with two hundred and twenty-five dollars and a big black empty hole in my heart. I was pleasantly surprised that Susan Cheever's article so closely described my experience.

I began taking classes at night, found an affordable apartment, and, finally, a good office job. During the six weeks after I gave my notice, my employers' arguments sounded hollow as they tried to convince me that I was making a mistake by going off to make friends, a career, and a home for myself. I knew hypocrisy when I saw it. The values with which they built their fortune and raised their children didn't apply to the "family member" who, more than any possessions they owned, made the opulent life style possible.

IRENE SCHMIDT
Astoria, N.Y.

I am afraid I can muster very little sympathy for the affluent employers (including the author) described in "The Nanny Track." After all, they can afford to pay for quality child care while legions of middle-class, lower-middle-class, and poor working women have far fewer options. Many, for reasons of economy, have no choice but to place their children in overcrowded, unhygienic, ill-run, understaffed, and sometimes unlicensed day-care centers—unless they choose to depend on an aged relative, or perhaps a neighbor who has children of her own and stays at home. For many women, finding a day-care situation in their area that fits both their work schedule and their economic range is a triumph in itself. Other countries have safe, hygienic, well-run, state-sponsored day-care centers with sliding-scale fees, which allow high-quality care for all children. Why doesn't ours?

The whining, self-absorbed drivel in "The Nanny Track" is an insult to women who have to work in order to survive and support their children, without the help of either a trust fund or checks from *The New Yorker*, and often without the luxury of a partner who, besides being present and accounted for, provides a second salary.

MARYANN MCCARRA
Yonkers, N.Y.

The tragic irony of the ongoing saga of "The Nanny Track" is not just that hardworking Americans have entrusted part of the raising of their children to poorly paid, possibly illegal immigrants but that many of these immigrants have abandoned their own children and families altogether to pursue "the American dream." In both cases, the mother is working to make a better life for her child. In both cases, the child is basically motherless. In both cases, they miss the point of being a mother.

HEIDI WOOD
Whiting, Vt.

Your heading for Susan Cheever's article mentions "the paradox that forces the affluent working mother to entrust the care of her children to another wom-

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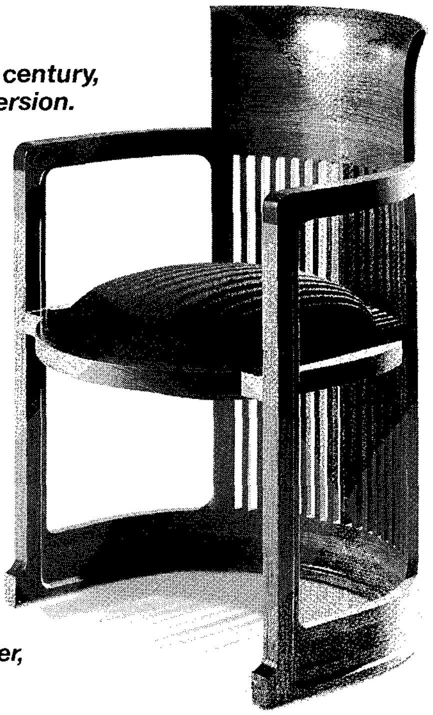

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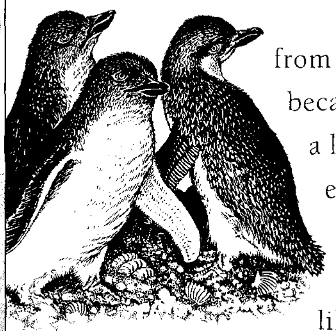

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an." I had hoped that by 1995 reporters, politicians, advocates, and the general public would notice the obfuscation in the phrase "working mother." What is meant is "employed mother." This is not a semantic quibble but a plea to writers and readers to consider that a "career mother" is one who, having the choice, chooses to commit herself to raising her children during infancy and early childhood, whereas an "employed mother" is one who earns money away from her children—whether by choice or not. Many mothers do not have the choice. As both nannies and career mothers would tell you, it is significant that our society sees "working mothers" and "employed mothers" as one and the same. Mothering a young child is work, and until our society believes this and accords equal status to child rearing and "the workforce" we will continue to compound the social pathology besetting all of us.

MARY JUNE LUND
La Mesa, Calif.

Jane Mayer's Comment "Motherhood Issue" (March 20th) makes some good points about the punitive aspects of the current Republican legislative agenda, but it completely misses the point of Marcia Clark's custody battle. The issue is not deciding whether Ms. Clark should be punished for her demanding career; it's deciding which parent is better equipped to care for the children. I assume Ms. Mayer is not advocating the sexist notion that mothers are intrinsically better parents than fathers. If Gordon Clark is truly willing and able to spend significantly more time with the children than Marcia Clark is, then he is the parent who should have custody. Although I agree that there's "a double standard in the current attack at every level of government on policies that make the lives of . . . women a little easier," this case doesn't illustrate that point, because Mr. Clark isn't seeking to evade responsibility for his children; he's embracing it. And it's disingenuous to ask, "When was the last time a prominent professional man was held up to front-page scrutiny for spending too many weekends at the office for his kids' good?" A man in Marcia Clark's position—hardworking and divorced or separated—almost certainly wouldn't have custody of the children in the first place. Ms. Mayer's article does not strike a blow for mothers; it merely muddies the waters.

ELOISE FLOOD
New York City

I found "Motherhood Issue" thoughtful and insightful, but I'm not sure that it brought home the following point: if Marcia Clark were a man with a time-consuming, high-powered career and the custody of two small children, and if that man spent his free time, however limited, with his children, he would be considered a wonderful father.

MADELYN MEHLMAN
New York City

If Marcia Clark's desire is indeed "to excel in the most challenging and difficult area of her field," there is nothing at all wrong with that. But, as the cliché goes, there are only so many hours in a day, and if there are none left at the end of it for her to act as a parent then there are several questions that she, and we, ought to ask. If her estranged husband is satisfied with a job that allows him the time to act as a parent, why ought Ms. Clark to be the primary custodian of their children? Why should she feel compelled to maintain her status as the primary custodian, hiding behind the outdated sexual stereotype that a woman is more nurturing and is therefore a more capable parent? And, finally, why, if she ceases to be the primary custodian—either temporarily or permanently—of their children, should she or anyone else see this change as a failure? Though much of the coverage of her "predicament" makes it seem that she would lose her children if that came to pass, she would not. Her time with her children would be rearranged so that, one hopes, it could be more fulfilling for both her and the children.

The real predicament is not that Ms. Clark deserves custody and that an ugly society is punishing her for her ambition; it is that she refuses to allow herself the freedom as a human being to relinquish a role that her estranged husband seems more capable of executing.

As a recently divorced father who puts his almost four-year-old daughter ahead of everything else, including professional success, I don't think Ms. Mayer contributes much that is useful to the resolution of this predicament by simply reifying old, rigid notions of parental roles. If Ms. Clark relinquished the stereotypically "maternal" role, which she has already done to some extent in a de-facto sense, then her children would benefit in many ways: they would have more constant, predictable attention from their parents; they would see their father in a traditionally "female" role and their mother in a traditionally "male" role; and they would grow up taking that for granted. That would be a good small step toward breaking down some of those old, rigid notions.

STEPHEN STARK
Houston, Texas

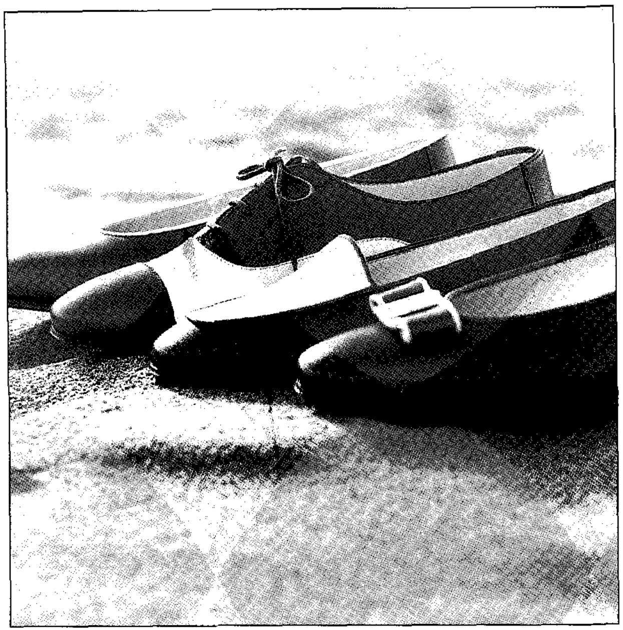
Susan Cheever and Jane Mayer both miss the central point in the parenting debate. To pit Mom vs. Dad, Mom vs. Nanny, or Mom-at-Home vs. Mom-at-Office is to obscure the real struggle: Child vs. Twentieth Century. Children are marginal now because they are impediments to an optimally functioning workforce. In the marketplace, kids exist only as consumers—and parental absence and guilt fuel the purchase of a million Barbies. We have also distanced ourselves from our children by becoming so politically correct that a parent's nurturing presence is deemed optional.

And we see this crisis as *our* problem: My ex-husband is out to get me! I'm punished because I work! I've got a second shift! *Poor me!* We have "choice," but we don't seem to want to recognize that choosing to bear a child confers ongoing obligation and responsibility. Children have primal needs for parental love, involvement, and contact. If their needs collide with the desires of parents, the position of women, or the demands of the workplace, that doesn't make those needs go away. Are we too afraid to declare standards for parenthood? Why do we worry more about the guilt feelings of the parent than about the pain of the child?

Trophy children are a modern tragedy.

LAURA HAYNES COLLECTOR
Sherman Oaks, Calif.

Letters should be as brief as possible, and sent with the writer's name, address, and daytime phone number to "In the Mail," The New Yorker, 20 West 43rd Street, New York, N.Y. 10036. They may be edited for length and clarity.



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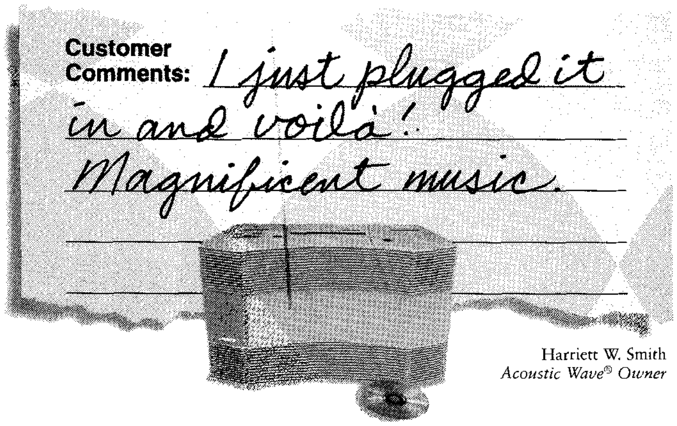

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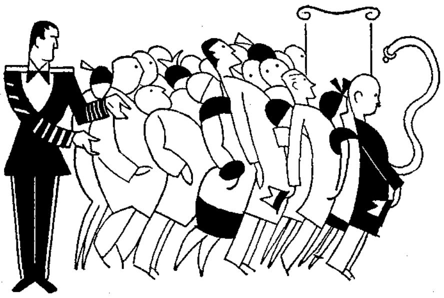

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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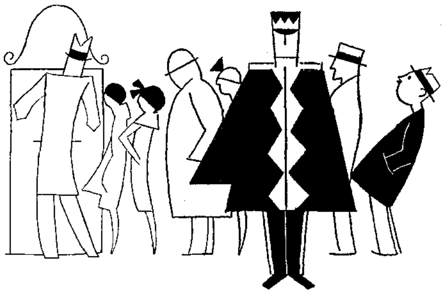


THE THEATRE

Howl

In Constance Congdon's 1989 comedy "Tales of the Lost Formicans," a remark by a stargazing paranoid more or less sums up the playwright's view of the human condition: "We're controlled by aliens. And they're idiots." In her new play, "Dog Opera" (in previews at the Public, starting April 18), Congdon has created a pair of city dwellers whose shared insecurity secures their friendship. Madeline (Kristine Nielson) is an elementary-school teacher who dramatizes her loneliness with hand puppets; Peter (Albert Macklin) is a gay man so unsure of his masculinity that he wonders if potential partners will think he's a transsexual. "Dog Opera" is a long howl by two lovelorn strays about the stupid relationships they get themselves into. The harsh vision of Congdon's earlier plays has softened somewhat, though. "I got tired of feeling sad," she explained recently. "I wanted to get out of the abyss a bit." But just a bit: an angel stands by to devour the dying in "Formicans"; in "Dog Opera," a flying Arapaho is on hand to ferry the dead to the next world.

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for timetables and ticket information.)

The Cryptogram—A new play by David Mamet, with Ed Begley, Jr., Felicity Huffman, and Shelton Dane. Preview on April 12. Opens April 13 at 7:45. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Dancing on Moonlight—Keith Glover's drama, set in Harlem in the early sixties, stars Terry Alexander, Anna Maria Horsford, and André De Shields. Previews continue through the April 15 matinée; opens that evening at 8. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

Dog Opera—A new work by Constance Congdon. Previews begin April 18. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

Hamlet—Ralph Fiennes is the Prince of Denmark in a production brought to our shores by London's Almeida Theatre Company. Previews begin April 14. (Belasco, 111 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Indiscretions—The first Broadway staging of "Les Parents Terribles," the 1938 play by Jean Cocteau. Kathleen Turner, Eileen Atkins, Roger Rees, Jude Law, and Cynthia Nixon make up the cast. In previews. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

A Language of Their Own—A drama by Chay Yew. The central characters are four gay men, played by B. D. Wong, Alec Mapa, Francis Jue, and David Drake. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 260-2400.)

A Month in the Country—The English actress Helen Mirren makes her Broadway début in the Roundabout's staging of the Turgenev classic. In previews. (Roundabout, Broadway at 45th St. 869-8400.)

Night and Her Stars—A play by Richard Greenberg, about the quiz-show scandals of the fifties. Presented by Manhattan Theatre Club. In previews. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 239-6200.)

On the Waterfront—Budd Schulberg and Stan Silverman have adapted Schulberg's screenplay for the 1954 movie for this new drama. The cast includes Penelope Ann Miller, Kevin Conway, and Ron Eldard. Previews begin April 15. (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 307-4100.)

Travels with My Aunt—Jim Dale and Brian Murray in Giles Havergal's adaptation of the Graham Greene novel. Opens April 12 at 6:45. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane. 307-4100.)

OPENED RECENTLY

Arcadia—The American première of Tom Stoppard's 1993 play, set in 1809 and the present. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Camping with Henry & Tom—Henry Ford (John Cunningham), Thomas Edison (Robert Prosky), and Warren Harding (Ken Howard) are out camping one day. . . . So begins Mark St. Germain's fictional account of an actual woodland episode from 1921. History comes alive here, but it doesn't go much beyond the bickering and joshing of these three flawed titans. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 239-6200.)

The Compleat Works of Wllm Shkspr (Abridged)—This slapstick hour and a half romp through the Bard's œuvre, carried out by three fine young gentlemen in high-tops, is utterly sophomoric and a complete waste of time—like some of the best things in life. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 307-4100.)

Damn Yankees—Jerry Lewis, the King of Comedy and the King of France, is now, in his Broadway début, the Prince of Darkness—the Devil himself. The old pro delivers the goods. And Charlotte d'Amboise, a sensational Lola, delivers the goods and then some. (Marquis, Broadway at 45th St. 307-4100.)

Death Defying Acts—Three subpar one-act comedies, by David Mamet, Elaine May, and Woody Allen, that have the words "Written to Order" stamped all over them. (Reviewed in our issue of 3/20/95.) (Variety Arts, Third Ave. at 14th St. 239-6200.)

The Family Business—Ain and David Gordon wrote, directed, and appear in this comedy about a family of plumbers with artistic yearnings; Valda Setterfield (mother of Ain, wife of David) rounds out the cast. The elder Gordon is hilarious as the aged aunt of your nightmares, but the production is damagingly self-conscious; it ought to be funnier and sadder than it is. (New York Theatre Workshop, 79 E. 4th St. 302-6989. Closes April 23.)

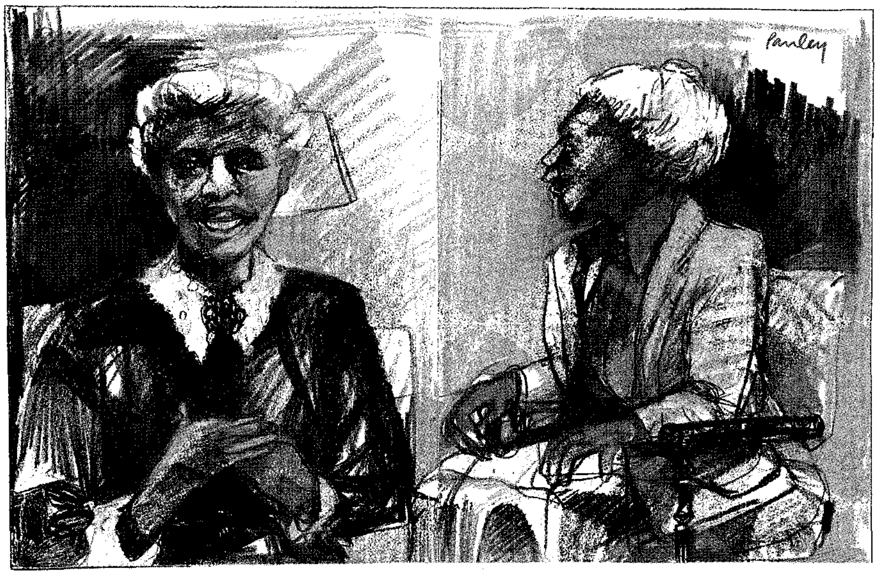
Fragments from Three Sisters: A Work in Progress—East Coast Artists' version of Chekhov's play. (La Mama, 74A E. 4th St. 475-7710. Closes April 30.)

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes—KT Sullivan is Lorelei Lee in a revival of the 1949 musical. Presented by the National Actors Theatre. (Lyceum, 149 W. 45th St. 239-6280.)

Goose and Tomtom—The Willow Cabin Theatre Company offers David Rabe's play. (28th Street Theatre, 120 W. 28th St. 886-1889. Closes April 30.)

Having Our Say—Gloria Foster and Mary Alice star in an adaptation of Sarah Louise and Anne Elizabeth Delany's best-selling book. (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

The Heiress—A revival of Ruth and Augustus Goetz's 1947 adaptation of Henry James' "Washington Square," directed by Gerald Gutierrez, that is emotionally brimming and, thanks to several memorable performances, alive with tension. Cherry Jones, who plays the heiress of the title, is exquisitely—almost unbearably—vulnerable; Philip Bosco brings a terrible authority to the role of her dutiful but soul-crushing father. And the wonderful Frances Sternhagen is, not surprisingly,



Gloria Foster and Mary Alice, in "Having Our Say."

LYNN PAULEY

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touching and funny as a widowed aunt. (3/20/95) (Cort, 138 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

How to Succeed in Business Without Really Trying—Matthew Broderick is the ambitious window-washer J. Pierrepont Finch in this revival of the 1961 musical. The score and lyrics are by Frank Loesser. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 307-4100.)

Hunger and Thirst—Eugène Ionesco's play, presented by the Independent Theatre Company. (House of Candles Theatre, 99 Stanton St. 353-3088.)

James Lecesne's Word of Mouth—The actor's remarkably varied solo show. (Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 580-1313.)

Jelly Roll!—The snakily elegant Vernel Bagneris plays Jelly Roll Morton, in a terrific show that traces the musician's transformation from New Orleans dandy into jazz legend. Morten Gunnar Larsen provides the thrilling piano accompaniment. (Kaufman, 534 W. 42nd St. 307-4100.)

London Suite—A new comedy by Neil Simon, with Carole Shelley, Paxton Whitehead, Kate Burton, and Jeffrey Jones. (Union Square Theatre, 100 E. 17th St. 307-4100.)

Love! Valour! Compassion!—The eight gay men in Terrence McNally's beautifully written drama connect in ways that almost any nuclear family would envy. Under the nimble direction of Joe Mantello, seven actors (including Stephen Bogardus, and John Glover doing double duty as identical twins) present humbling evidence of what love is and can be. (11/14/94) (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 239-6200.)

Memories of an Unknown Celebrity—Michael Mindlin's monologue about his famous friends. The show's director is Phyllis Newman. (William Redfield, 354 W. 45th St. 279-4200.)

Mrs. Warren's Profession—The Pearl Theatre Company wraps up its season with Shaw's drama. Margo Skinner is Mrs. W., and the cast also features Chelsea Altman, John Braden, Bradford Cover, Robert Hock, and Woody Sempliner. The director is Alex Dmitriev. (80 St. Mark's Pl. 598-9802.)

The Only Thing Worse You Could Have Told Me . . .—Dan Butler, in his one-man show, takes a look at contemporary gay culture. (Actors' Playhouse, 100 Seventh Ave. S. 307-4100.)

Rob Becker's Defending the Caveman—A hundred-minute stand-up routine, with some audiovisual effects thrown in, by a guy who's tired of hearing women say that all men are jerks. Some of Becker's examples of discontent between the sexes are very funny (a lot of vigorous nodding goes on in the theatre—never by men and women at the same time), but a fair amount of them are shopworn. By now, there ought to be a law against trying to get yucks out of the fact that men won't stop to ask for directions. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 307-4100.)

Rush Limbaugh in Night School—A comic tour de force in which Rush Limbaugh, to boost his show's ratings, decides to learn Spanish secretly at the liberal New School (where no one will recognize him). Charlie Varon, who plays all twenty-one roles, is not only very funny but also somehow believable, even as an Israeli "somatic feminist" who commands a New School audience to "feel your genitalia—*now!*" Developed with David Ford and directed by Martin Higgins. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200. Closes April 15.)

St. Mark's Gospel—Alec McCowen reprises his solo recitation of the entire King James version of the New Testament book. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

Show Boat—Harold Prince's epic-size production of the 1927 Jerome Kern–Oscar Hammerstein II musical: full of life and full of vision. (10/17/94) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 307-4100.)

Ballet Concierto de Puerto Rico, at the Joyce.

JEAN-PHILIPPE DELHOMME

Smokey Joe's Café—The Songs of Leiber and Stoller—A feast of music by those cool cats Jerry Leiber and Mike Stoller, performed by a cast with Grade A lungs and legs. The songs themselves—"Hound Dog," "Yakety Yak," "On Broadway," "Stand by Me," and a few dozen more—are a blissful pop marriage of black and white. But the accompanying band has about as much soul as a run-of-the-mill combo at a wedding reception. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 239-6200.)

Sunset Boulevard—Glenn Close continues her triumphant run as Norma Desmond. (12/5/94) (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 307-4007.)

Three Viewings—Jeffrey Hatcher's play, which is set in a funeral home, consists of three fine comic monologues, and not much mourning goes on in them: the speakers have come not to pay their last respects but to gab about how they fit into the world the dear departed have left behind. Margaret Whitton, as a blue blood turned casket robber (she sucks a pair of ruby earrings from the lobes of a rich stiff), and Penny Fuller, as a widow who has inherited more debt than her husband's frozen assets can cover, are both funny and affecting. Buck Henry, as a lovesick undertaker, is Buck Henry. Mary B. Robinson directed. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-1212. Closes April 30.)

Too Jewish?—Avi Hoffman's "one-mensch" show is a musical revival of sorts: he wants to revive Yiddish—with music. His revue, a mixture of songs and stories, features the audience favorite "I'm a Litvak—She's a Galitz" and the lesser-known "I'm Dreaming of a White Hanukkah," by Israel Baline (Irving Berlin to you). It should go without saying that a show that tenderly recalls the Yiddish theatre and invokes a world watched over by Jewish mothers is schmalzy, but is it too Jewish? Yeah—so sue him. Musical arrangement and accompaniment by pianist Ben Schaechter. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200.)

Varla and the Man Who Got Away—The putative daughter of Ethel Merman and Ernest Borgnine has overcome the trauma of having been shunned as a child and is ready to claim her show-biz birthright on the legitimate stage. It's a travesty indeed that this giggly, mock-autobiographical cabaret show follows up its glamorous premise with nothing but predictable camp. If only the six-foot redheaded Varla Jean Merman (Jeff Roberson) had an ounce of her mother's vocal talent—or her *father's*—she would be sitting pretty. (Westbeth Theatre Center, 151 Bank St. 741-0391.)

Yepeto—A comedy by the Argentine playwright Roberto Cossa opens the twenty-ninth-anniversary season of the Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre. Performances in Spanish alternate with ones in English. (304 W. 47th St. 354-1293.)

LONG RUNS

ALL IN THE TIMING: John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 239-6200. . . . **BEAUTY AND THE BEAST:** Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 307-4100. . . . **BLOOD BROTHERS:** Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **BLUE MAN GROUP/TUBES:** Astor Place Theatre, 434 Lafayette St. 254-4370. . . . **CATS:** Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200. . . . **CRAZY FOR YOU:** Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838. . . . **GREASE!:** Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 239-6200. . . . **AN INSPECTOR CALLS:** Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **JACKIE MASON: POLITICALLY INCORRECT:** Golden, 252 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **KISS OF THE SPIDER WOMAN:** Broadhurst, 235 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200. . . . **MISS SAIGON:** Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200. . . . **PERFECT CRIME:** Duffy, 1553 Broadway, at 46th St. 695-3401. . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200. . . . **STOMP:** Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477. . . . **THAT'S LIFE!:** Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090. . . . **THREE TALL WOMEN:** Promenade, Broadway at 76th St. 239-6200. . . . **TONY N' TINA'S WEDDING:** St. John's Church, 81 Christopher St. 279-4200. . . . **THE WHO'S TOMMY:** St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 239-6200.

DANCE

Ballet Concierto de Puerto Rico—The San Juan-based company, in "Carmen," "Valses y Variaciones Alegres," and "Gateway to El Yunque." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. April 12-14 at 8, April 15 at 2—a family matinée—and 8, and April 16 at 2 and 7:30.)

Doug Elkins Dance Company—The nine-member company, in "The Narcoleptic Lovers," "More Wine for Polyphemus," and "Accumulating Gauguin." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. April 13-15 at 8 and April 16 at 3.)

"New Dances for the 21st Century"—Works by up-and-coming choreographers, including a pair by Mary Cochran, one of Paul Taylor's most popular dancers. Onstage, Cochran's melting languor alternates with sock-it-to-'em verve, and she choreographs the same way. Both of her new pieces are about relationships. (Kaye Playhouse, Hunter College, Park Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. April 13, April 15, and April 17, all at 8, and April 16 at 7:30.)

"You can sing anytime . . ."—Choreographer Polly Motley and filmmaker Molly Davies collaborate on an evening-length work that looks at simple personal gestures, using slides, film, computer images, and nine dancers. (The Kitchen, 512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. April 13-16 at 8.)

"Ear to the Ground"—The Mulberry Street Theatre series of commissioned premières begins with Stephanie Gottlob and Yuji Oka's "Faith," a piece about intimacy in ordinary married life, and new works by Li Chiao-Ping, which draw on Chinese folklore and spiritual beliefs. (70 Mulberry St., second floor. 349-0126. April 13-15 at 8.)

Croll, Dunn, King, Perron—The four modern dancers, whose careers have often crossed paths (Tina Croll and Wendy Perron were Bennington dance majors in the sixties, Douglas Dunn was in Croll's first company, Perron danced Kenneth King's early work, etc.), meet again, for an evening of solos, duets, and a collaborative improvisation. (P.S. 122, 150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. April 13-16 at 9.)

Isadora Duncan: American Dance Visionary—The emancipated interpretative dancer with the sensational life and death—rich, suicidal lovers and that fatally long scarf—is commemorated in tributes by Anna Sokolow, Paula Koner, and Carolyn Adams, performances by dancers Strain Stodt and Robin Becker, and a reading by the actress Barbara Feldon. (Museum of the City of New York, Fifth Ave. at 104th St. April 15 at 1. No charge beyond museum admission.)

NIGHT LIFE

CONCERTS

Rainforest Foundation Benefit—With Bruce Springsteen, Jessye Norman, Sting, Elton John, James Taylor, Jon Bon Jovi, and Geoffrey Oryema. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. April 12 at 7.)

Music by Ji Hi Kim—A program of works that meld traditional Korean tunes with contemporary Western music, performed by Thomas Buckner, Oliver Lake, William Parker, and others. (Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St. 362-8719. April 13 at 8.)

Dick Hyman, Marian McPartland, and Ruth Laredo—The two jazz musicians team up with the classical artist for a three-piano crossover concert. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100. April 13 at 8.)

"We Remember Sarah Vaughan"—Highlights in Jazz salutes the late singer. The performers include Bobby Short, Ruth Brown, and Barbara Carroll. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 346-1715. April 13 at 8.)

Mark Dresser / George Cartright / Kevin Norton—Three Knitting Factory regulars take their avant jazz uptown. (Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. April 14 at 6. No tickets necessary.)

Tamara Gverdtsiteli—Born in Tbilisi, Georgia, this Caucasian chanteuse sings with the passion of her Parisian heroine, Edith Piaf. She'll be performing standards, in French, Russian, Hebrew, Spanish—and English, too. With the celebrated Russian jazz saxophonist Alexei Kozlov and his combo, Arsenal. (Carnegie Hall. April 16 at 3.)

Tribute to Antonio Carlos Jobim: Brazil Projects '95—Both heavy hitters (Joao Gilberto, Milton Nascimento, Sting, Herbie Hancock, Caetano Veloso) and well-meaning wisps (Dave Grusin, Michael Franks) will be on hand to salute the great Brazilian composer, who died last January. Jobim may be forever associated with "The Girl from Ipanema" and the bossa-nova craze, but he was a supreme, irreplaceable melodist. (Avery Fisher Hall. 875-5030. April 18 at 8.)

Nanci Griffith—On her early albums, this folk-country singer from Texas struck some listeners as a lightweight talent. She's been setting them straight with the energy and solid good taste of her recent work. And she puts on a thrilling show. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. April 18 at 8.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type indicates some of the more notable performers in town. Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives; it is advisable to call ahead to confirm engagements.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Vocalist **julie wilson** is currently in the midst of an extended run. Dining.

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—Mondays belong to the Grove Street Stompers, Tuesdays through Thursdays to Al Bundy and Johnny Parker, Fridays and Saturdays to the Freddy Francis trio, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—Through April 16: **maynard ferguson and big bop nouveau.** Cuban pianist **gonzalo rubalcaba** (in for a week starting April 18) is a virtuoso—a fact he demonstrates with cascading phrase after cascading phrase. Bass master Ron Carter will be on hand to help stem the flood. Dining.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A duskily lit neighborhood bar, where pianists, bassists, and, occasionally, drummers compete for your ear. Truth and beauty usually prevail. Through April 15: piano and bass with **larry willis** and **david williams.** On April 17, a trio featuring **john hicks, russell malone,** and **ray drummond** drops by for a week.

Cajun, 129 Eighth Ave., at 16th St. (691-6174)—A New Orleans-style restaurant specializing in Dixieland and swing. On Fridays, catch

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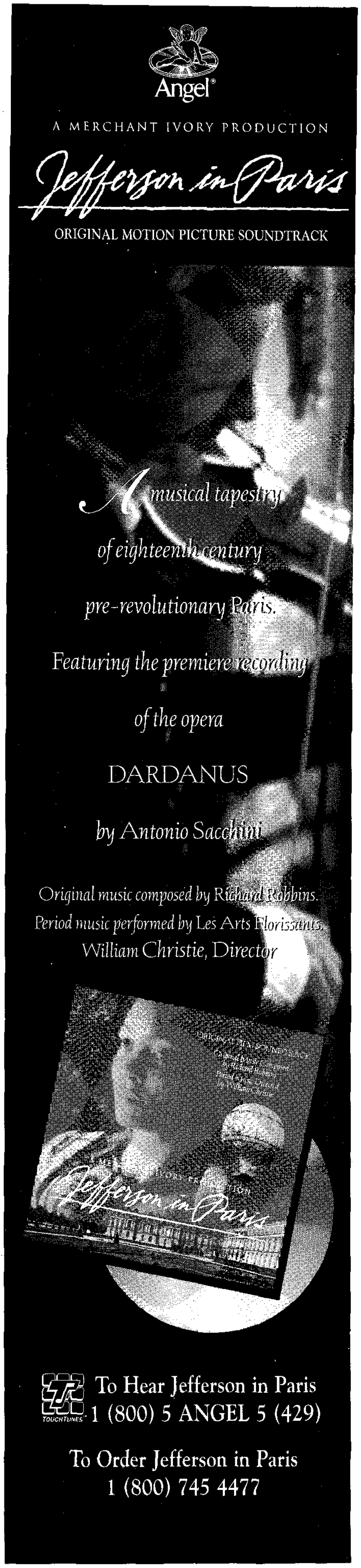
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the Canal Street Dixieland Jazz and Blues band. Saturdays belong to the New Atlantic Jazz band.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—EARTHA KITT (in through late April) is still a fierce and funny performer. She inhabits her material: when she sings "I Wanna Be Evil," you don't doubt for a second that she could spit tacks.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7900)—Through April 16: Vocalist MARLENA SHAW. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor LES PAUL leads a trio. Dining.

Fifty Seven Fifty Seven, 57 E. 57th St. (758-5757)—A sleek piano-and-bass room in the Four Seasons Hotel. Thursdays through Sundays, DONALD JOHNSTON is the featured pianist; on Fridays and Saturdays he performs with a trio. Dining.

Five Spot, 4 W. 31st St. (631-0100)—April 14-15: The PHILIP HAMILTON trio. Dining.

Iridium, 44 W. 63rd St. (582-2121)—Across the street from Lincoln Center, this restaurant and club features a handsome bar upstairs and a surreal performance space downstairs. Through April 13: the MILT HINTON trio. The eighty-three-year-old bassist, jazz's answer to Vladimir Horowitz, is a patriarch whose mastery and musical spirit expand with age. No one can slap the bass like The Judge. April 14-16: The VAL CAPERS trio. Dining.

Knickerbocker, 33 University Pl., at 9th St. (228-8490)—An Old New York kind of place, with dark wood panelling, white tablecloths, and brass figurine lamps. April 12-15: Piano and sax with JUDY CARMICHAEL and MIKE HASHIM.

Knitting Factory, 74 Leonard St., between Broadway and Church St. (219-3055)—April 13: An evening of duos—sax and cello with STEVE LACY and IRENE AEBI, followed by digital samples and d.j. bricolage with SAMM BENNETT and CHRISTIAN MARCLAY. One of the funkiest bands ever, DEFUNKT (here April 14-15) is the high-spirited alter ego of Joseph Bowie, a trombonist with long roots in the avant-jazz worlds of St. Louis and New York. In the early eighties, when irony was still ironic and not simply the norm, Defunkt yanked the ear of downtown New York with deep dance grooves, blues-scratched guitars, soulful horn riffs that fishtailed into iconoclastic improvisations, and social commentary delivered as gospel-flavored testifying; thanks to Bowie's lively sense of humor, the shows were wild and unpredictable. These days, he has a new lineup (with guitarist Ronny Drayton and vocalist Kelli Sae) and a forthcoming album, "One World."

Match, 160 Mercer St. (343-0020)—This hip SoHo *boîte* is the place to be every Sunday night, thanks to the SHORTY JACKSON LEGACY BLUES BAND, featuring the eighty-nine-year-old LAUREL WATSON. Dining.

Metronome, 915 Broadway, at 21st St. (505-7400)—In the shadow of the Flatiron Building, a cavernous, elegant restaurant that features live music every weekend.

Metropolis, 31 Union Sq. W. (675-2300)—A swank basement club, home to high-profile outfits. April 13-16: ELVIN JONES. Tuesdays are given over to the GEORGE GEE ORCHESTRA, a seventeen-piece swing band, fronted by the polymorphously energetic Mr. Gee. Dancing is encouraged.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—Woody Allen continues his Monday-night job as clarinet player in the NEW ORLEANS FUNERAL AND RAGTIME ORCHESTRA, a Dixieland-jazz ensemble. Closed Sundays.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza (632-5000)—The great cabaret in the sky. Through late April: LILIANE MONTEVECCHI and DAVID STALLER, in a program called "April in Paris." . . . ¶ Across the hall, in the Rainbow Room, there's a revolving dance floor, plus swinging big-band music courtesy of the Rainbow Room Orchestra, featuring vocalists Michael Andrew and Claudette Sierra. Closed Mondays.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—Thursdays belong to Stan Rubin's big band; Fridays to Lew Anderson's big band and Sam Ulano and the Bourbon Street Swingers; and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell and his Stompers.

Smalls, 183 W. 10th St. (929-7565)—This aptly named club features young and up-and-coming players jamming late into the night.

S.O.B.'s, 204 Varick St., at W. Houston St. (243-4940)—A great grass hut with a fruit-and-bamboo motif. April 12-13: The JAZZ PASSENGERS, with special guest DEBORAH HARRY. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Along with such valiant souls as Tom Varner and Vincent Chancey, JOHN CLARK (in through April 13) remains dedicated to maintaining the French horn's foothold on jazz. April 14-16: The MARC CARY quartet. The assurance and easy gait of this pianist's playing is a tribute to his apprenticeships with Betty Carter and the late Art Taylor, two great jazz drill sergeants. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter MILES EVANS is in action on Mondays. Dining.

Tavern on the Green, Central Park W. at 67th St. (873-3200)—Through April 16: the DIVA BIG BAND. Vocalist JUDY ARGO takes over on April 18. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—Through April 16: the RON CARTER quintet. Few can touch Carter on the bass, and even fewer can come close on the piccolo bass, a high-pitched mutant that the master trots out for his own gigs. Joining him will be the excellent pianist Stephen Scott and jazz's most dependable drummer, Lewis Nash. Pianist GERI ALLEN swings by for a week beginning on April 18. The VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA holds sway on Mondays.

Visiones, 125 Macdougal St., at W. 3rd St. (673-5576)—April 14-16: The GUST TSILIS quintet. Tsilis is an ambitious player who's pushing the vibraphone into the next century. On the marimba he's perfected a compelling style that suggests Bobby Hutcherson and Gary Burton. Dining.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—A rarity among jazz clubs: somewhere you'd go to eat even if there were no music. Through April 15: A trio featuring JOHN BUNCH, JAY LEONHART, and BUCKY PIZZARELLI.

ROCK, ETC.

Academy, 234 W. 43rd St.—April 13: LUSCIOUS JACKSON, a decidedly New Yawk girl group whose raucous blend of hip-hop and pop has earned them an opening slot on R.E.M.'s upcoming summer tour. (For concert information, call 307-7171.)

A.K.A., 77 W. Houston St., at Wooster St. (673-7325)—April 15: SMART BROWN HANDBAG.

Blarney Star, 43 Murray St. (732-2873)—Home to fine Irish music every Friday night. April 14: An evening of flute and guitar with SKIP HEALY and MATT GLOVER.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—April 12: The husband-and-wife guitar-and-vocal duo known as TUCK & PATTI. April 13: JUNE TABOR. April 14: TRILOCK GURTU and DAVID TORN. April 15: STEVE FORBERT. This folk-rock troubadour from Meridian, Mississippi, appeared on the New York scene in the late seventies and released four albums in quick succession. After six years without a new record, he resurfaced in 1988 with "Streets of This Town," a strong collection of tuneful, hopeful (but not mindlessly hopeful) songs. His next album, in 1992, was "The American in Me," a thin, disappointing toss-off with none of the spirit or sad truthfulness of his best work. Still, little Stevie can always be counted on to offer a solid live show, and when he sings one of his full-bodied songs about love and longing and loss, his fans will have the pleasure of thinking, Yes—exactly. April 16-17: JOAN BAEZ. Though she's in her fifties, her soprano is still as pure and clear as springwater. For these shows (which are being recorded for a live album due out next fall), the folk legend will perform solo and with a few of her progeny—the Indigo Girls and Mimi Fariña, on April 16, and Tish Hinojosa, on April 17. Dining.

Brownies, 169 Avenue A, at 10th St. (429-8392)—April 15: BAND OF SUSANS and KUSTOMIZED, two great—soon to be huge—combos.

CBGB & OMFUG, 315 Bowery, at Bleecker St. (982-4052)—A narrow, graffiti-strewn cave packed every evening with new and used bands. April 15: The **BLACK ROCK COALITION.** April 18 belongs to **MOON POOLS CATERPILLAR.** . . . ¶ Next door, the neat and comfortable testament to gentrification called CB's Gallery plays host to the **UNSUNG STRING DUO** on April 12.

CHICAGO B.L.U.E.S., 73 Eighth Ave., at 13th St. (924-9755)—Blues guitarist **PHIL GUY** (Buddy's little brother) tears it up on April 14-15.

THE COOLER, 416 W. 14th St. (229-0785)—A lavender-and-stainless-steel dungeon deep in the heart of the meat district. April 14: **TUBA** and **COOLY'S HOT BOX.** Spoken-word diva **MAGGIE ESTEP** says interesting things on April 15. Wednesday nights are given over to experimental d.j. spinoffs.

CONTINENTAL DIVIDE, 25 Third Ave., at St. Marks Pl. (529-6924)—Hipsters, punks, poseurs, N.Y.U. students, the occasional skinhead—a typical East Village bar. Live music nightly.

DON HILL'S, 511 Greenwich St. (219-2850)—A tidy little SoHo bar with an above-average P.A. system and topnotch local bands on the docket. Friday night is Squeeze Box, a vinyl and velvet gay glamfest.

FEZ, 380 Lafayette St. (533-7000)—April 15-16: The Loser's Lounge desecrates "Jesus Christ Superstar." This Holy Saturday-Easter Sunday spectacular includes members of the Bongos, Lotion, and Canned Travolta. April 17: "The Honeysuckles," a weekly live soap opera. April 18: **SOPHIE B. HAWKINS.** A few years back, Hawkins' début album featured a pouty hip-hop number called "Damn, I Wish I Was Your Lover." It seemed like the start of a stellar career. In the great Madonna tradition, she posed provocatively for the press (a topless spread in *Interview*) and talked a lot about sex. Her follow-up record, a credible piece of work called "Whaler," seems to have suffered from what is commonly referred to as the sophomore jinx: no one heard it and it bombed. Still, she is an interesting performer—sort of a cross between Stevie Nicks and Prince (or whatever his name is)—and she should be in good form in this intimate room. The **MINGUS BIG BAND** still packs them in every Thursday. Dining.

FLANNERY'S, 205 W. 14th St. (929-9589)—A well-scrubbed, amiable Irish pub with many of the classic features (pints of Guinness, non-stop TV sports) and a few of the near-classics (a CD jukebox, a portrait of Elvis).

IRVING PLAZA, 17 Irving Pl., at 15th St. (777-6800)—This sprawling two-floor establishment has been all things to all people: meeting hall, rock club, jazz club, Off Broadway theatre. April 13: **SLASH'S SNAKEPIT.** Slash is, of course, the frizzy-haired, sleepy-eyed guitarist from Guns N' Roses. Snakepit is his inevitable solo project, and it includes members of Jellyfish and Alice in Chains. April 14: **FROM GOOD HOMES,** an excellent country-tinged rock-and-roll band. . . . ¶ Tuesday nights are devoted to Soul Kitchen, a (late) evening of seventies funk and R. & B. On Sundays, the Swing Dance Society pays homage to the Lindy Hop and the old Savoy Ballroom. Sets from eight until midnight. For information on the society, call 696-9737.

KAPTAIN BANANA, 101 Greene St. (343-9000)—French cabaret *en travesti* in SoHo. Three drag queens and eight dancers re-create the Court of Versailles, a carnival in Rio, Marlene Dietrich, and the Andrews Sisters. There's also a singing gorilla. Dining.

LIMELIGHT, Sixth Ave. at 20th St. (807-7850)—The rock-and-roll church. Wednesday night is Disco 2000, a fin-de-siècle blowout.

LUDLOW STREET CAFÉ, 165 Ludlow St. (353-0536)—A modest below-stairs room that looks like a spruced-up tenement apartment. Mondays belong to **BEAT RODEO,** a straight-shooting bar band that plays a mixture of country, blues, Dylan, Byrds, Velvets, and various pop curiosities.

MAXWELL'S, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken (1-201 798-4064)—**FUGAZI** (in on April 13), one of the best American bands most Americans have never heard of, makes a lean, smart sound full of driving, syncopated rhythms that bring to mind such long-lost groups as the Clash and the Police. April 15: The Buffalo-based **GOO GOO DOLLS,** a groovy rock-anthem band specializing in power chords and stadium-size hooks. Their sound—a blend of punk, metal, and pop—brings to mind the Replacements, but they're more starry-eyed and youthfully driven. (And the Replacements never made a habit of performing barefoot.) They'll be playing material from their excellent new album, "A Boy Named Goo."

MERCURY LOUNGE, 217 E. Houston St. (260-4700)—Is **ALEX CHILTON** (here for three nights beginning April 18) the most underrated or the most overrated artist in the history of rock and roll? It's a question that remains unanswered about the man from Memphis who (as a high-school sophomore) put the gravel into the Box Tops' classic bubblegum hit, "The Letter." Over the past three decades, he's been the leader of Big Star, the Cramps' producer, a dishwasher, and the subject of a Replacements song; these days, he seems content to cut records that showcase his sardonic approach to blues, rockabilly, country, and R. & B. (his latest is "A Man Called Destruction"). Like any self-respecting cult hero, Chilton can occasionally be a surly pill who disses his worshipful audience with a lousy show. But the risk is worth it—he's the closest thing we have to a one-man timeline of American pop.

NELL'S, 246 W. 14th St. (675-1567)—A Victorian-style club, home to an eclectic crowd of downtown youngsters dancing to throbbing funk and techno-pop. Monday night is Funky Buddha, with live bands and d.j. Derek Corley "on the wheels."

PADDY REILLY'S MUSIC BAR, 519 Second Ave., at 29th St. (686-1210)—**BLACK 47** usually plays on Saturdays and Speir Mor (Gaelic for Big Sky) performs for a hearty following on Fridays. Séisiún—a traditional Irish jam—is on Thursday nights.

LES POULETS, 16 W. 22nd St. (229-2000)—The name may be French, but the music here is Latin: expect salsa, merengue, and the cha-cha. Dining.

RODEO BAR, 375 Third Ave., at 27th St. (683-6500)—April 12: **FIVE CHINESE BROTHERS.** This band formed more than a decade ago at Columbia University (as the Special Guests), and they've gone on to become local heroes and a great journeyman act. Think Squeeze or Crowded House, only louder, looser, bluesier—more American. Sunday evenings belong to **THE FLYING NEUTRINOS.**

TRAMPS, 51 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—April 14: **FREEDY JOHNSTON** and **KEVIN SALEM.** Johnston is a singer-songwriter from Kansas who brings a tough country-punk spirit to folk-rock music and turns out remarkably haunting songs. Salem, who often plays guitar for Johnston, also has his own record, "Soma City," a collection of forlorn gems. April 15: **COP SHOOT COP.**

WEBSTER HALL, 125 E. 11th St. (353-1600)—A byzantine disco wonderland with four floors, a coffee shop, and a wig boutique. Wednesday is drag night. Psychedelic Thursdays feature grunge acts and cheap beer.

WETLANDS, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—The **RUTH GERSON** band plays on April 12. Local funkster **MILO Z** whoops it up on April 13. April 15: **MOE,** a Phish-friendly combo, and **EKOOSTIK HOOKAH,** a jam-happy band from Ohio.

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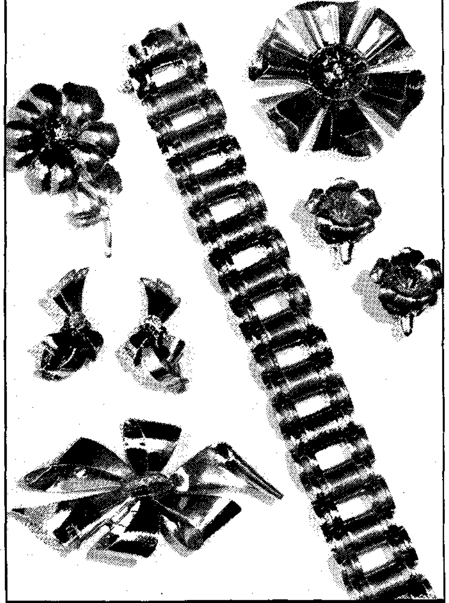

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ART

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Portraits of George Sand, Delacroix, Baudelaire, and Berlioz are among those on view in an exhibition of works by the master photographer Nadar (Félix Tournachon, 1820-1910). Starts April 14. . . . ¶ "An Egyptian Bestiary," a large non-petting zoo of falcons, baboons, hippos, and ibis, in stone, ivory, gold, bronze, and wood. Starts April 12. . . . ¶ The Costume Institute has come up with a fresh take on the old spring flower show: in "Bloom: Fashion's Spring Gardens," one wanders among stands of gowns, bodices, and waistcoats adorned with tropical exotica, blue-blood roses, black fleurs du mal, and a host of other flora. . . . ¶ "R. B. Kitaj," a retrospective of more than seventy paintings by the American expatriate who for nearly four decades has lived and worked in London. Through May 14. . . . ¶ "I Tell My Heart: The Art of Horace Pippin," a selection of paintings by a self-taught black artist from Pennsylvania (1888-1946). . . . NOTE: On April 13, in celebration of its hundred-and-twenty-fifth anniversary, the museum will host a daylong program of free walking tours, lectures, films, and musical performances. At 11 A.M., a birthday-cake-cutting ceremony will be held in the courtyard of the American Wing. For more information, call 535-7710. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—A retrospective of video installations, sculptural objects, walk-in environments, and sound pieces by Bruce Nauman. Through May 23. . . . ¶ "Helen Chadwick: Bad Blooms," yet another variation on the spring flower show: large, round photographs of flowers suspended in different substances (dandelions in hair gel, narcissi in bath bubbles, bluebells in oil and milk). . . . ¶ "Kandinsky: Compositions." Through April 25. . . . ¶ Tom Friedman's deadpan sculptures are the subject of the current "projects" show. A self-portrait has been carved from a regular-sized aspirin tablet; other pieces incorporate bubble gum, spaghetti, and dust. Through May 18. . . . ¶ A selection of drawings from the sixties by such sculptors as Eva Hesse, Robert Smithson, Dan Flavin, Kenneth Snelson, and Sol LeWitt. . . . ¶ "Max Beckmann Prints" includes lithographs, drypoints, and woodcuts from throughout the German Expressionist's career. (Open Saturdays through Tuesdays, 11 to 6; Thursdays and Fridays, noon to 8:30.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—A Ross Bleckner retrospective treats us to liberal helpings of the painter's familiar stew of sublimity and kitsch—the work of a soul profoundly divided between the raptures of a mystic and the whimsies of an interior decorator. Much of it is sickly gorgeous; some of it betrays a deep spiritual longing. Through May 14. . . . ¶ A ten-year survey of the work of Felix Gonzalez-Torres. This Cuban-born Neo-Conceptualist supplements his typically sparse or abstract imagery (stacks of paper, sometimes bearing cryptic messages; spills of hard candies and of bubble gum) with parenthetical subtitles that allude to AIDS, politics, and more personal themes. Through May 10. (Open Sundays through Wednesdays, 10 to 6, and Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 8.)

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—All the floors of the Biennial exhibition are now open. (Open Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, 11 to 6; Thursdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; and Fridays, 11 to 9, with no admission charge after 6, and live music and performances in the lower gallery.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Spiders!" Are you ready for this arachnorama? Twelve live tarantulas are at the center of the web. You can also get caught up in anatomical diagrams, habitat dioramas (who knew?), exoskeleton models, and courtship videos (yecch). . . . ¶ A large show of paintings made for Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson during their study in Bali from 1936 to 1938. (Open daily, 10 to 5:45, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—The African galleries have reopened, greatly expanded, and now contain more than two hundred and fifty works. . . . ¶ Two other displays are new: the Arts of the Pacific gallery, which has works from Melanesia, and the Arts of the Andes, in the Great Hall. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—"New Finds, Old Treasures: Early Chinese Ceramics from the Meiyintang Collection" brings renowned pieces together with recent and surprising archeological discoveries. The golden age of Chinese ceramics coincided with the Song dynasty (960-1279), and examples of its five great wares are the loveliest pieces on view. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—"Division of Labor: 'Women's Work' in Contemporary Art." Fifty works, by both women and men, that use unconventional techniques (sewing, knitting) and have nontraditional subject matter (domesticity, housework). Artists include Judy Chicago, Miriam Schapiro, Charles LeDray, Yayoi Kusama, and Kiki Smith. Through June 11. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

Museum for African Art, 593 Broadway—Antelope, leopards, hyenas, snakes, chameleons, buffalo, pangolins, and warthogs—they can all be seen in "Animals in African Art: From the Familiar to the Marvelous." (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10:30 to 5:30; Saturdays, noon to 8; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Isamu Noguchi Garden Museum, 32-37 Vernon Blvd., at 33rd Road, Long Island City—Now open for its tenth season, this museum, with its twelve galleries and peaceful, ivy-walled center garden, is an oasis for more than two hundred and fifty of the artist's sculptures. (Open Wednesdays, Saturdays, and Sundays, 11 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays, from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Joe Andoe—These seven monumental paintings of horses, by an Oklahoma artist, have the hyperreal impact of early photography. The gray-and-umber palette creates a spooky, twilit realm of phosphorescence. Through April 15. (Blum Helman, 20 W. 57th St.)

Dozier Bell—Large paintings and several photocollages with titles like "Lodestar," "Bearing," and "Coriolis," containing sea-and-sky imagery and navigational symbols. Through April 29. (Schmidt Bingham, 41 E. 57th St.)

Nell Blaine—Two concurrent shows of work by the second-generation New York School colorist. At Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St.: Recent paintings and drawings of bouquets, landscapes, and cityscapes. Through May 6. . . . ¶ At De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St.: Works from the late forties through the mid-eighties. Through May 6.

Peter Cain—Two paintings, two manipulated photos, and several drawings that continue this young artist's slice-and-reassemble treatment of automobile imagery. Through April 25. (Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St.)

Susan Crile—Vivid black, orange, and yellow canvases from the "Fires of War" series, inspired by the burning oil fields in Kuwait. Through April 22. (Graham, 1014 Madison Ave., at 78th St.)

Andy Goldsworthy—Two installations: a cone of green Vermont slate, and a group of rocks from Scotland with natural indentations that hold pools of red water. Also on view are large color photographs of other works made in Scotland. Through April 22. (Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St.)

Al Held—Uninflected paintings rendered in poisonous acrylic colors. Held's floating polygons dazzle the eye and then, almost immediately, turn dull. An enormous amount of effort has gone into creating pictures that look exactly like something a computer hack could have generated with a few keystrokes. Through April 22. (Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St.)

Giuseppe Penone / Dan Graham—New works in wood and glass, the fruit of arboreal inspirations, by an Arte Povera master. Penone, it seems, shall never see a sculpture lovely as a tree. / A re-creation of this Conceptualist's 1974 installation "Opposing Mirrors and Video Monitors on Time Delay," which creates an illusion of infinite recession in which viewers can not only watch themselves but also watch themselves watching themselves. Through April 22. (Marian Goodman, 24 W. 57th St. Open Mondays. . . . ¶ Another work by Graham is at American Fine Arts, 22 Wooster St., through April 15.)

Joel Shapiro—Spare painted-wood sculptures that hover in an intriguing middle ground between geometric abstraction and figuration. A group of flying rectangles, which are unfinished except for a light stain of gray, gently suggests an acrobatic figure. Another work, in which black pigment has been splashed across a blood-red surface, toys with Abstract Expressionism. Shapiro has a sure touch; this is an exhibition to linger over. Through April 22. (Pace Wildenstein, 32 E. 57th St.)

"Conspiratorial Laughter"—The friendship of Marcel Duchamp and Man Ray is among the most famous in the history of art, and this well-chosen exhibition comprises many of their best collaborations. More than a dozen of Ray's portraits of Duchamp are on view, including a hilarious shot of the great man wearing a headdress of Turkish coins (purportedly for his initiation into a society devoted to the memory of Alfred Jarry). There is also a photograph of the two artists by Cartier-Bresson. Through April 15. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

"Drawings, Pastels, and Watercolors"—A hodgepodge of nineteenth- and twentieth-century works, some of them gems. Delacroix's study of a crouching tiger is a tightly composed bundle of energy. An exquisitely finished fleshy nude by Pissaro, in pastel on blue paper, practically begs to be pinched. A surprising caricature by Monet, of a man who is the spitting image of Charles de Gaulle, is as droll as anything by Daumier. David, Picasso, Bonnard, and Gauguin are well represented, too. Through April 21. (Wildenstein, 19 E. 64th St. Open Mondays; closed Saturdays.)

"On the Brink 1900-2000: The Turning of Two Centuries"—Disease, technology, war, apocalypse—all the favorite millenarian concerns—are addressed in the works of the new fin-de-siècle artists (Sue Coe, Luis Cruz Azaceta, Gary Panter, David Wojnarowicz) and in those of the old (James Ensor, Käthe Kollwitz, Edvard Munch, Egon Schiele). Through May 26. (Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St.)

Short List—**MARCEL BROODTHAERS,** Werner, 21 E. 67th St. Open Mondays; through May 6 . . . . **STEVEN CONROY** and **LARRY RIVERS,** Marlborough, 40 W. 57th St. Open Mondays; through April 29 . . . . **SIDNEY GOODMAN,** Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St. Through April 29 . . . . **DUANE HANSON,** Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St. Through May 6 . . . . **JOAN NELSON,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. Through April 29 . . . . **LARRY POONS,** Salander-O'Reilly, 20 E. 79th St. Open Mondays; through April 29 . . . . **MARTIN PURYEAR,** McKee, 745 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Through April 15 . . . . **GEORGE SEGAL,** Janis, 110 W. 57th St. Through April 29.

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

Matthew Barney—An installation derived from the artist's new video work, "CREMASTER 4." In it, Barney roams around elaborate sculptural tableaux on the Isle of Man. Screenings are held at the Public Theatre on Thursdays at 4, and Saturdays and Sundays at 1:30 and 3. For reservations, call 431-5794. Through May 6. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Dinos and Jake Chapman—Naughty sculptures reminiscent of Charles Ray's, by two young British brothers who have taken ordinary department-store mannequins and . . . *altered* them. The results suggest some of the more outré acts on "The Robin Byrd Show." Through April 29. (Gavin Brown's Enterprise, 558 Broome St. Open Wednesdays through Saturdays, noon to 7.)

Allan McCollum / Sol LeWitt—In "Natural Copies: From the Coal Mines of Central Utah," recastings of dinosaur footprints in various sizes and colors (including turquoise, orange, and bubble-gum pink) cover the entire floor of the gallery's main space. McCollum has always played on the tension between originals and copies; in this imposing installation, he extends his investigation to nature and nature's own copies, the fossil record. / Working drawings from the sixties to the present by the pioneering Conceptualist. As he remarked in "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," his seminal article, "When an artist uses a conceptual form of art, it means that all of the planning and decisions are made beforehand and the execution is a perfunctory affair. The idea becomes a machine that makes the art." These drawings are part of that machine. Through April 22. (Weber, 142 Greene St.)

Mariko Mori / Dan Graham—An auspicious début by a young Japanese woman who might just be the art world's version of Shonen Knife. Drawing inspiration from Jean-Paul Gaultier and Thierry Mugler, as well as from Cindy Sherman, she makes huge color photographs of herself modelling various whacked-out cyberchic outfits in the streets of Tokyo. In one, she chats coyly on a cellular phone; in another, she's poised for battle in a video arcade. The costumes themselves are on view, too, encased in suitably space-age plastic bubbles. / In the gallery's back room, two mirrored installations by a veteran Conceptualist whose work has a trippy sci-fi spirit. Through April 15. (American Fine Arts, 22 Wooster St.)

Gary Simmons—Five large paintings and a sculptural installation, "Sound Garden," that incorporates a parquet floor, a square planter full of white pansies, and four black speakers suspended from the ceiling. Through May 13. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

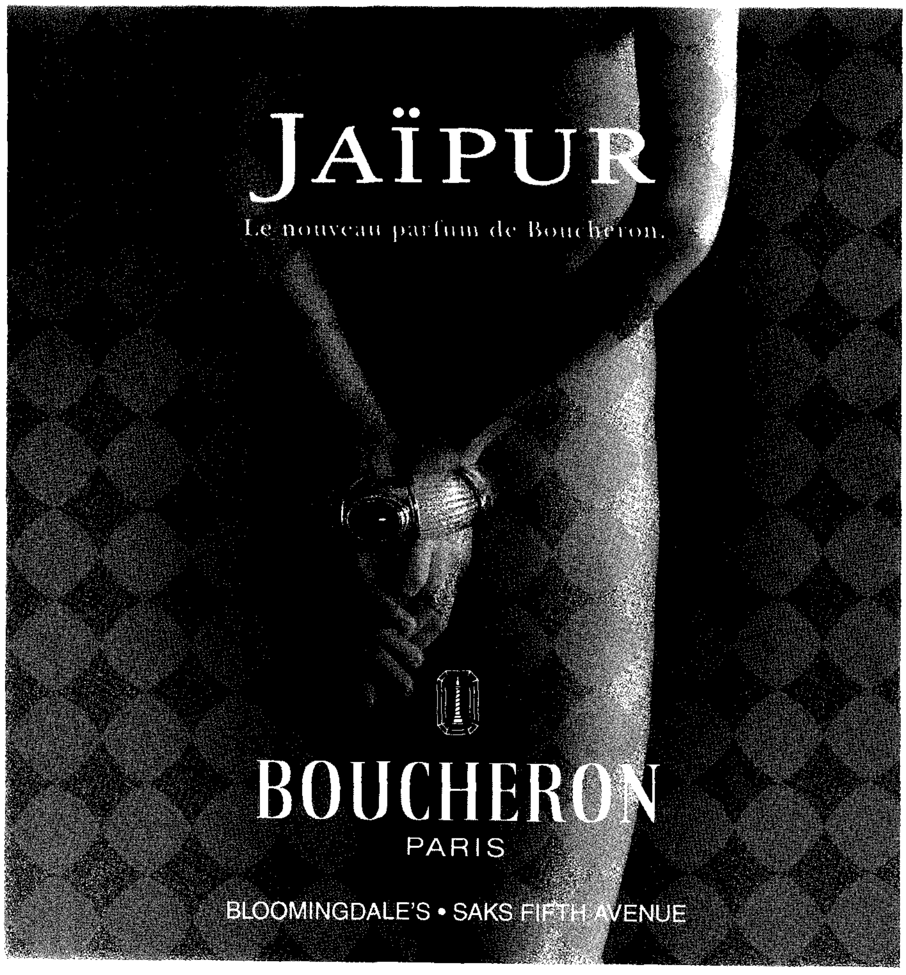
Frank Stella—Enormous new paintings that recall the wonderful era when bigger sometimes really was better. The artist seems to have flattened out his relief paintings of the seventies and eighties, restoring the two-dimensionality of his sixties work while still exploiting a virtually trompe-l'oeil illusionism. A tour de force. Through April 15. (Gagosian, 136 Wooster St.)

Kazumi Tanaka—The thirty-three-year-old artist's new installation, "An Intimate Room," is an evocative group of autobiographical sculptures beautifully crafted from wood, wire, and family possessions. Through April 22. (Kent, 67 Prince St.)

Richard Tuttle—Tuttle gained renown in the late sixties and early seventies for his fragile, sometimes virtually invisible works. These recent wall-mounted sculptures—decorative pieces in latex, plastic foam, cloth, and chicken wire—seem almost rococo by comparison. Through April 29. (Boone, 417 West Broadway.)

Nicola Tyson—Paintings and drawings by a member of the retro Surrealist camp, who favors blobby, mutant, yet recognizably feminine forms. Her homunculi are, on the whole, more seductive than repulsive. Through April 15. (Petzel, 26 Wooster St.)

Robert Whitman—"Backtrack" (1994-95), six multimedia installations by an artist who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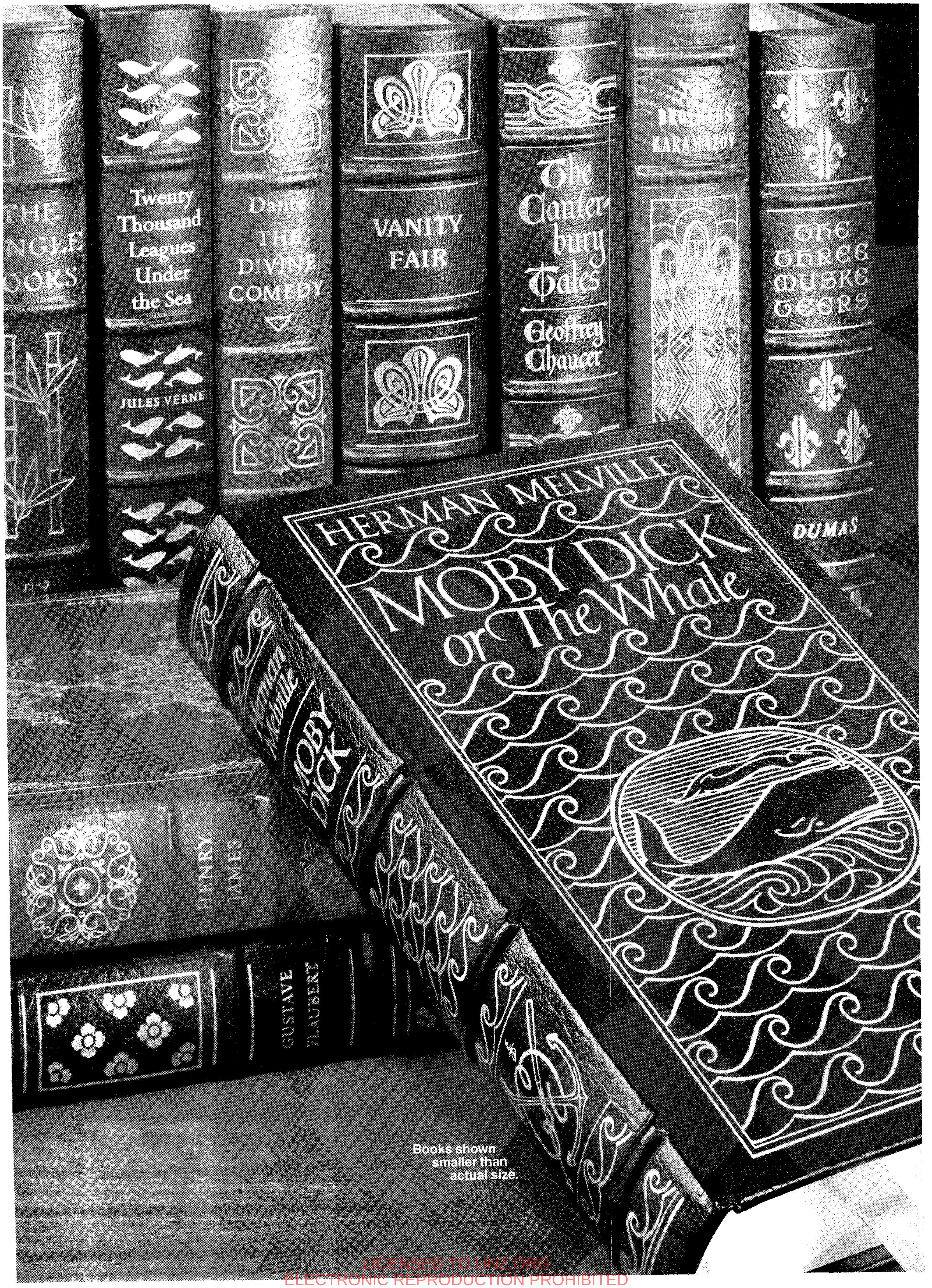
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Twenty Thousand Leagues Under the Sea
Jules Verne
Dante
The Divine Comedy
Vanity Fair
The Canterbury Tales
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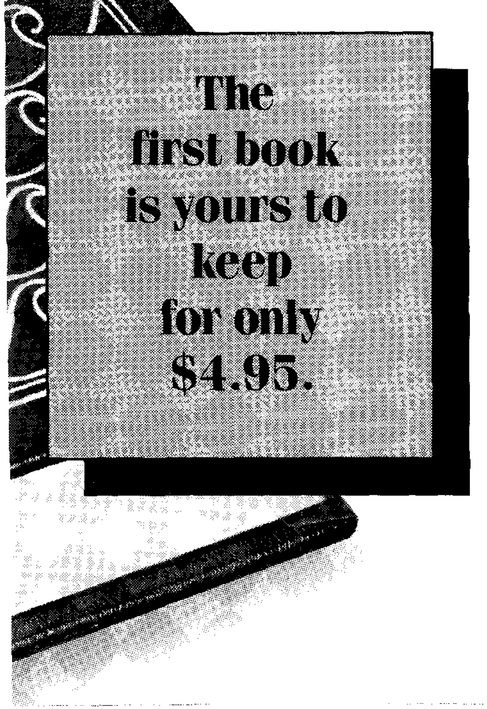

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came to prominence in the late fifties as part of the group that staged the first "happenings," at the Reuben Gallery. His works, which fused art, technology, theatre, and dance, are relatively unknown today, but his influence—particularly on Robert Wilson and other avant-garde theatre artists—has been enormous. Standouts in the current show include a work in which a stream of mineral oil douses an illuminated light bulb (it seems slightly dangerous) and another in which images of blue sky and clouds, projected onto a scrim of men's dress shirts, create shifting patterns on the wall behind. Through May 6. (Pace Wildenstein, 142 Greene St.)

"Endurance"—"It must give pleasure," Wallace Stevens said of art. More often for the artists represented in this indispensable historical show, it gave pain. In the early seventies, Chris Burden got a friend to shoot him in the arm with a rifle, crawled across fifty feet of broken glass, and had himself crucified on the back end of a Volkswagen Beetle. In a more poetic vein, Marina Abramovic and her former partner, the artist Ulay, walked from opposite ends of the Great Wall of China, taking ninety days to meet in the middle ("The Lovers," 1989). The exhibition also includes photo-documentation of important performances by Vito Acconci, Joseph Beuys, Yoko Ono, and many lesser-known yet fascinating figures. Through April 22. (Exit Art, 548 Broadway. Open Friday and Saturday evenings until 8.)

Group Show—Relics and photo-documentation of performance pieces and body works from the early sixties to the present. Among the highlights are Charles Ray's "All My Clothes" (1973), sixteen color photographs in which the artist models the whole of his incredibly dweeby wardrobe, and Carolee Schneemann's "Eye Body" (1963), black-and-white photos that meld performance art and Abstract Expressionism. Through April 15. (Karg, 100 Greene St.)

Short List—**STAN DOUGLAS**, Zwirner, 43 Greene St. Through April 29 . . . . **MAUREEN GALLACE**, Klagsbrun, 51 Greene St. Through April 22 . . . . **KEVIN LARMON**, Marcus, 578 Broadway. Through April 22 . . . . **MELISSA MILLER**, Holly Solomon, 172 Mercer St. Through April 22 . . . . **FRANK MOORE**, Sperone Westwater, 142 Greene St. Through April 22 . . . . **RONA PONDICK**, Freire, 130 Prince St. Through May 20 . . . . **ELLIOTT PUCKETTE**, Kasmin, 74 Grand St. Through May 13 . . . . **ED RUSCHA**, Castelli, 420 West Broadway. Through April 22 . . . . **JESSICA STOCKHOLDER**, Gorney, 100 Greene St. Through April 29.

PHOTOGRAPHY

John Baldessari—A display of the California Conceptualist's artist books, which in many cases are based on his larger photographic works. Through April 28. (Printed Matter, 77 Wooster St. Open Saturday evenings until 7.)

Lois Conner—Single- and multi-panel platinum contact prints of landscapes in Vietnam and Cambodia, which exhibit a startling tonal range and a richness of detail reminiscent of nineteenth-century photography. Through April 15. (Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St.)

Nan Goldin—The artist's reworked "Ballad of Sexual Dependency" (1982), a forty-five-minute color-slide-with-soundtrack presentation, is being screened three times a day, at 1, 3, and 5. Through April 16. (Marks, 522 W. 22nd St. Open Thursdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

Yorghos Kontaxis—Black-and-white views of Coney Island taken between 1969 and 1978. Through April 29. (O.K. Harris, 383 West Broadway.)

Dorothea Lange (1895-1965)—"American Photographs" covers Lange's documentary work from the thirties through the fifties: pictures of the poor, the forgotten, the abandoned, and the racially stigmatized that are neither sloppy nor sentimental nor contrived. The show includes plenty of lesser-known images and offers new perspectives on the classics. Through April 30. (International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Tuesday evenings until 8.)

TICKETS
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Yorghos Kontaxis's Coney Island, at O.K. Harris.

Floris Neusüss / Marcel Broodthaers (1924-76)—Life-size photograms from 1960 to the present, made with human figures, flowers, and found objects. / Photo works incorporating drawing and collage, by the Belgian Conceptualist. Through April 29. (Sander, 19 E. 76th St.)

Aaron Siskind (1903-91)—The artist's last series of photographs is the "Tar Pictures"—close-up views of streaks of tar on the asphalt roads of New England. Through April 29. (Mann, 42 E. 76th St.)

Brett Weston (1911-93)—Selections from three portfolios: "Portraits of My Father," "Alaska," and "Oregon." Through May 13. (Witkin, 415 West Broadway.)

Short List—**DAVID ARMSTRONG**, Marks, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. Through April 25 . . . . **BERND AND HILLA BECHER**, Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway. Through April 15 . . . . **JAMES CASEBERE**, Klein, 40 Wooster St. Through April 22 . . . . **MARJORIE CONTENT**, Washburn, 20 W. 57th St. Through April 29 . . . . **LYNN DAVIS**, Houk Friedman, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. Through May 13 . . . . **ADAM FUSS**, Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. Through April 29 . . . . **DOUG AND MIKE STARN**, Pace-MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. Through April 29.

(See the museum listings for photography exhibitions at the Metropolitan Museum and the Museum of Modern Art.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC

Hornists' Nest

The French horn was the Romantic instrument par excellence: its mellow timbre, redolent of the hunt and the forest, synchronized with the sentiments of the early nineteenth century. "The feelings aroused by its charm are generally admitted to be irresistible," boasted Louis-Ferdinand Dauprat in his 1824 "Horn Method," which would guide a generation of players through the instrument's fearsome technical terrain. Horn makers did their part to smooth the way; by mid-century, they had introduced valves, which made the entire chromatic scale attainable at the flick of a few fingers.

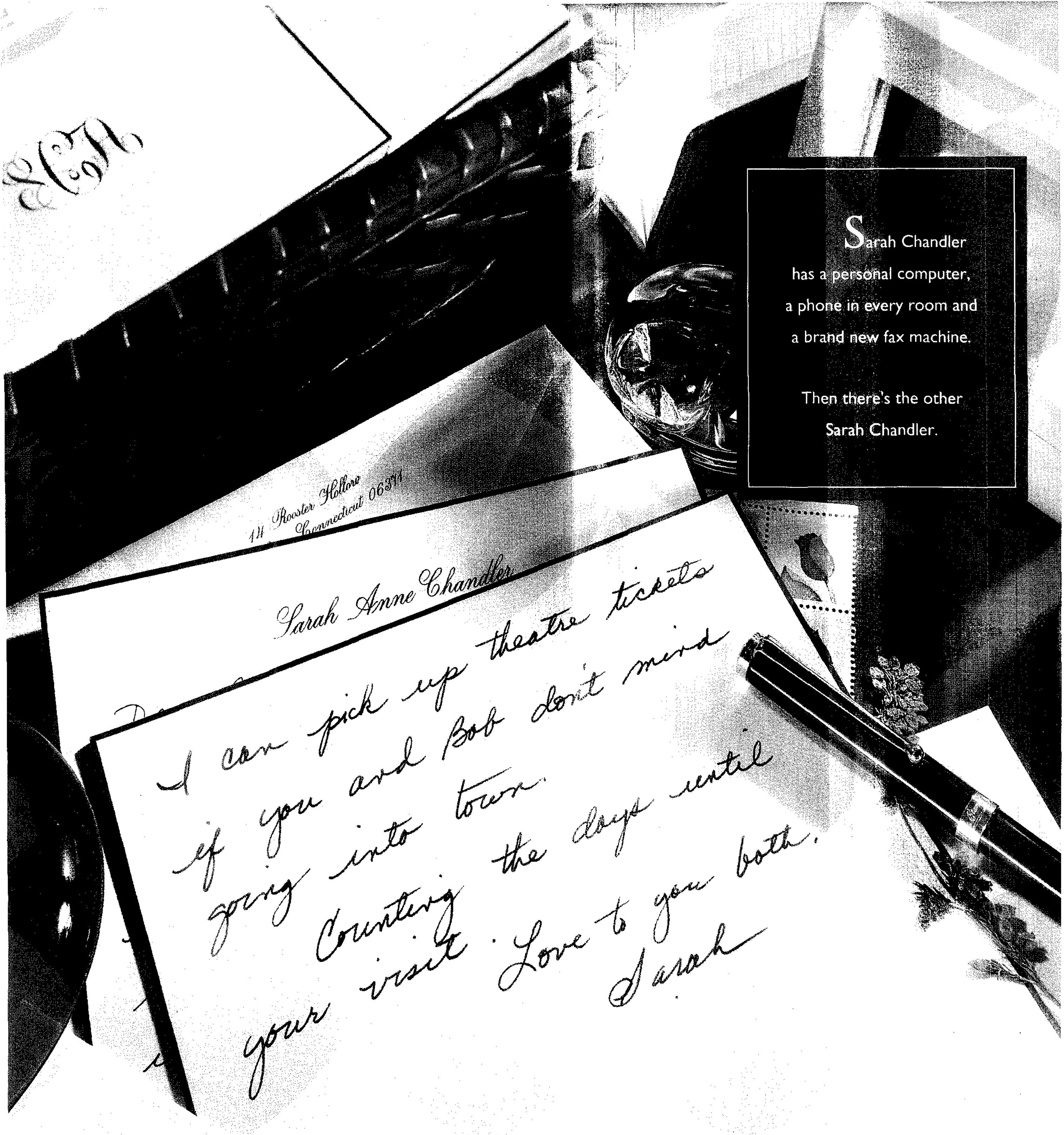
The Romantics' love affair with the horn reached its apex in Robert Schumann's "Conzertstück" (as the composer spelled it) for four horns and orchestra, a concerto in which the orchestra's entire horn section acts as a solo unit. It's a beautiful work, from its fanfare-like opening through its languorous slow movement to its spirited finale. If it isn't revived as frequently as it deserves, that's probably because the horn's inherent instability practically insures that any performance will include a few clinkers. Nonetheless, the piece is enjoying a renaissance in these parts, where it was played last August by the American Symphony Orchestra (at the Bard Music Festival) and in January by the Orchestra of St. Luke's. This week, the New York Philharmonic negotiates it under the baton of Kurt Masur, who can claim a connection to the work's origins: in addition to heading the Philharmonic, he continues to serve as music director of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra, which premièred the "Conzertstück" in 1850, with the composer on the podium.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall, 875-5050; for Avery Fisher Hall, 875-5030; for Carnegie Hall and Weill Recital Hall, 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**THE GHOSTS OF VERSAILLES**, by John Corigliano, with Teresa Stratas, Marilyn Horne, Allan Glassman, Gino Quilico, and Hector Vasquez; conducted by James Levine. (April 12 and April 18 at 8 and April 15 at 1:30.) . . . **PELLÉAS ET MÉLISANDE**, with Frederica von Stade, Ms. Horne, Dwayne Croft, Victor Braun, and Nicolai Ghiaurov; Mr. Levine. (April 13 at 8.) . . . **PARSIFAL**, with Gwyneth Jones, Plácido Domingo, Wolfgang Brendel, Robert Lloyd, and Donald McIntyre; Mr. Levine. (April 14 at 6:30.) . . . **MADAMA BUTTERFLY**, with Diana Soviero, Yun Deng, Richard Margison, and Kim Josephson; Samuel Cristler. (April 15 at 8.) . . . With Maria Spacagna, Ms. Deng, Mr. Margison, and Dwayne Croft; Mr. Cristler. (April 17 at 8.) (Metropolitan Opera House.)

New York City Opera—**LUCIA DI LAMMERMOOR.** (April 12 at 8 and April 15 at 1:30.) . . . **HARVEY MILK.** (April 13 at 8.) . . . **LA BOHÈME.** (April 14 and April 18 at 8.) . . . **THE MERRY WIDOW.** (April 15 at 8.) . . . **LA TRAVIATA.** (April 16 at 1:30.) (New York State Theatre. 870-5570.)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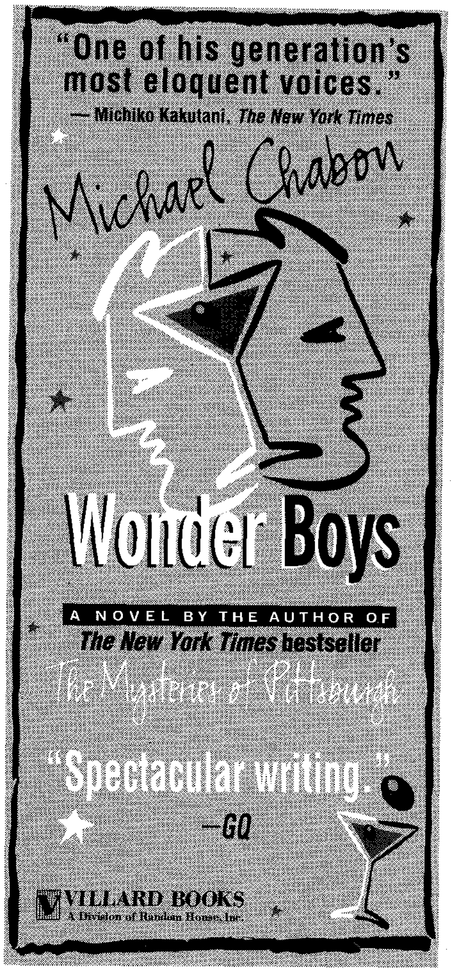
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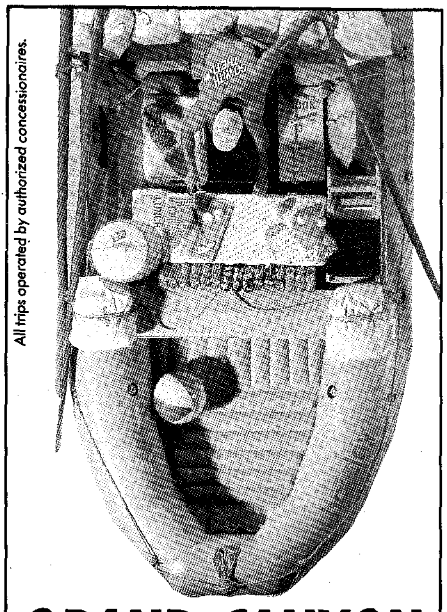
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ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—Kurt Masur conducts Schumann's "Conzertstück" (featuring the orchestra's hornists Philip Myers, R. Allen Spanjer, Erik Ralske, and Howard Wall), along with Weber's "Euryanthe" Overture, Prokofiev's "Romeo and Juliet" Suite, and the première of John Williams' "The Five Sacred Trees" (a bassoon concerto, spotlighting the Philharmonic's principal bassoonist, Judith LeClair). (Avery Fisher Hall. April 12-13 at 8 and April 14 at 11 A.M.)

The Other Verdi—Though the term "non-operatic Verdi" rings almost as an oxymoron, the composer did write a handful of works not destined for the lyric stage. Vincent LaSelva, who is leading the New York Grand Opera Company through a seven-year traversal of Verdi's twenty-eight operas, has assembled all of the composer's non-operatic music (except the celebrated Requiem) into a single program—and he's even found room to include the original "Aida" Overture, which was excised before the opera's première to reduce the running time. The program comprises three of the "Quattro Pezzi Sacri" (Verdi having disowned the first), an 1880 Ave Maria for soprano and strings (apparently in its New York première, featuring Cynthia Springsteen), the E-Minor String Quartet (in a composer-sanctioned expansion for string orchestra), and the "Inno delle Nazioni" ("Hymn to the Nations"), a stirring cantata on themes of European brotherhood, commissioned for the 1862 London International Exhibition (featuring tenor Rafael Suarez). Mr. LaSelva directs his company's chorus and orchestra. (Alice Tully Hall. April 12 at 8.)

R.I.P.—Holy Week invites performances of classic requiem settings. The following are among several that will be heard in town this week. April 12 at 8: Fauré's Requiem, among other works, with James Litton directing the St. Bartholomew's Choir and the Fairfield Orchestra. (St. Bartholomew's Church, Park Ave. at 50th St. 751-1616, ext. 248.) . . . ¶ April 14 at 7:30: Mozart's Requiem, with Bruce McInnes leading the Grace Church Choral Society and Orchestra and the Sarah Lawrence College Chamber Choir. (Grace Church, Broadway at 10th St. 533-4653.)

Hilliard Ensemble—The London-based choir performs Arvo Pärt's "Passio," with an instrumental ensemble and the Choir of Corpus Christi Church (directed by Louise Basbas). (Alice Tully Hall. April 13 at 8.)

BachWorks—Richard Erickson directs an all-Bach concert: the D-Minor Harpsichord Concerto (featuring Bradley Brookshire), the motet "Lobet den Herrn," and the Cantata No. 4 ("Christ Lag in Todesbanden"). (St. Paul's German Lutheran Church, 315 W. 22nd St. April 16 at 5. Tickets at the door on the day of the concert.)

Mannes Farewell—Notable graduates of the Mannes College of Music perform in a tribute to Charles Kaufman, who is about to end his sixteen-year tenure as the school's dean and president. The roster includes soprano Olga Makarina, mezzo-soprano Frederica von Stade, pianist Sun Mei-Ting (in Ravel's G-Major Concerto), conductor Yves Abel, and the Mannes Orchestra. (Alice Tully Hall. April 17 at 8. For information about tickets, call 496-8524.)

Concert Royal—Harpsichordist James Richman leads the period-instrument group in an "all-Bachs" program comprising a flute concerto by Carl Philip Emanuel (with Sandra Miller) and Johann Sebastian's Third "Brandenburg" Concerto, D-Minor Harpsichord Concerto, and Cantata No. 210 (with soprano Amanda Balestrieri). (Merkin Concert Hall. April 18 at 8.)

Young Concert Artists—For the past thirty-four years, Young Concert Artists has shepherded a select group of emerging musicians through the phase of uncertainty that precedes fully commercial management. Three musicians who are currently developing their careers under the organization's aegis make their New York concerto débuts this evening. Cellist Alban Gerhardt is the soloist in Tchaikovsky's "Variations on a Rococo Theme"; Alex Slobodyanik performs Prokofiev's Piano Concerto No. 3; and Dmitri Berlinsky plays Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto. Young Concert Artists alumna Eugenia Zukerman also appears, performing Griffes' "Poem for Flute and Orchestra." Gerard Schwarz conducts the New York Chamber Symphony. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. April 18 at 8:30. For information about tickets, call 307-6655.)

RECITALS

Eighty-Eight Times Two—Following a spell of relative dormancy, the art of duo-pianism has reëmerged with a vengeance. Aficionados of piano-ensemble performance will have no trouble keeping busy this week. April 12 at 8: Yefim Bronfman and Joseph Kalichstein offer Schumann's "Bilder aus Osten," Brahms' "Variations on a Theme by Haydn," and Stravinsky's "The Rite of Spring." (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.) . . . ¶ Also April 12 at 8: The duo-piano ensemble Double Edge (Edmund Niemann and Nurit Tilles) plays sonatas by Poulenc and Brahms (in F-Minor, Op. 34b), Satie's "Entr'acte Cinématographique" (as arranged by Milhaud), and Kevin Volans' "Cicada." (Merkin Concert Hall.) . . . ¶ April 18 at 7: The dyad of Jon Klibanoff and Mia Chung perform solo, four-hand, and two-piano music, including Schubert's F-Minor Fantasy and Ravel's "La Valse." (Weill Recital Hall.)

Julian Bream—The classical guitarist plays suites by Bach and Robert de Visée, in addition to music by Bartók, Mompou, and Piazzolla. (Borden Auditorium, Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. 749-2802, ext. 428. April 13 at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—Upholding an annual tradition of the New School Concerts, the foursome performs Haydn's "Seven Last Words of Christ." This curious but deeply moving succession of seven ten-minute slow movements, each depicting one of Jesus' final words, was particularly adored by the violinist Alexander Schneider, who founded the concert series in 1957 and directed it until his death, in 1993. He believed that the work was one of music's most profound masterpieces—as well it may be—and introduced it as New School Easter fare thirty years ago; in 1985, he cemented its status as an annual Easter landmark in New York's concert life. (New School, 66 W. 12th St. 229-5689. April 16 at 3.)

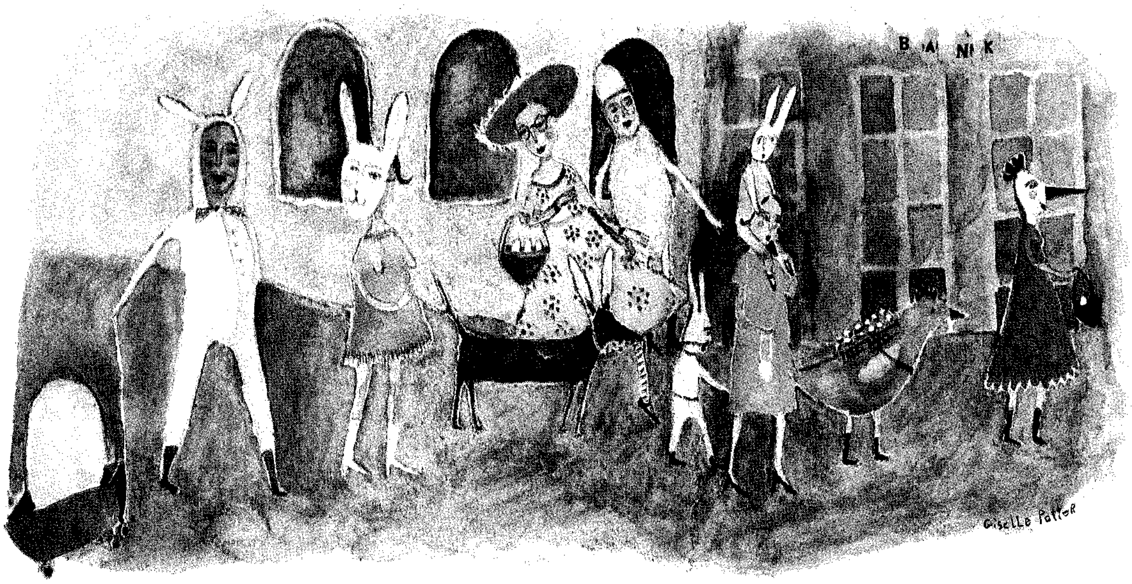
Alfred Brendel—The pianist completes his three-season traversal of Beethoven's piano sonatas by playing the three Op. 10 sonatas and the Sonata in B-Flat Major (Op. 106, the "Hammerklavier"). (Carnegie Hall. April 17 at 8.)

Margaret Leng Tan—This daring diva of the avant-garde keyboard usually performs on (or inside, or under) a concert grand of the sort that well-known piano manufacturers build with more standard use in mind. In this recital, however, only one of the five instruments she'll play is a grown-up Steinway. The other four are eighteen-inch-high toy pianos—uprights as well as grands—including a new thirty-seven-key Schoenhut model crafted by the Jaymar Toy Company specifically to meet Tan's unusual needs. Her hour-long program comprises toy-piano works by Cage (who was apparently the first to write for the instrument, in his 1948 "Suite for Toy Piano"), Glass (a two-toy-piano version of his "Modern Love Waltz"), Toby Twining, Wendy Mae Chambers, Jed Distler, Jerome Kitzke, and Milos Raickovich. (Bloomingdale House, 323 W. 108th St. 663-6021. April 18 at 7. A panel discussion follows the performance.)

ALSO OF INTEREST

BARGEMUSIC: Chamber works by Dvořák, Milhaud, and Brahms (his Piano Quintet). (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-

4061. April 13 at 7:30 and April 16 at 4.) . . . **MONTSERRAT CABALLÉ:** The soprano sings arias by Cilea, Boito, and others. José Collado conducts the New Jersey Symphony Orchestra. (Carnegie Hall. April 13 at 8.) . . . **CITY ISLAND SUNDAY:** Three string quartets by Haydn. (Le Refuge Inn, 620 City Island Ave., City Island, the Bronx. 1-718 885-2478. April 16 at noon.) . . . **SALON SOIRÉES:** Piano quartets by Dvořák and Brahms (in G Minor). (Hotel Wales, Madison Ave. at 92nd St. April 16 at 6 and 8. No tickets necessary.) . . . **NEW YORK NEW MUSIC ENSEMBLE:** Performing recent works by David Liptak, Louis Karchin, Wayne Peterson, and Charles Wuorinen. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 17 at 8.) . . . **JESSYE NORMAN:** The soprano, in songs by Berg, Strauss, Poulenc, Messiaen, and Ravel. (Carnegie Hall. April 18 at 8.) . . . **LEONARDO TRIO:** In piano trios by Beethoven, Schumann, and Wolfgang Rihm. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. April 18 at 8.) . . . **CUARTETO LATINO AMERICANO:** The Mexican string quartet plays works by Revueltas, Debussy, and others. (Americas Society, Park Ave. at 68th St. April 18 at 8. For information about tickets, call 935-6075.) . . . **LEAGUE OF COMPOSERS/ISCM:** Presenting compositions by Eleanor Cory, Ruben Seroussi, Alton Clingan, Leo Kraft, Roger Zahab, and Margo Simmons. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. April 18 at 8. Tickets at the door.)



On the Avenue, Fifth Avenue: the Easter Parade.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

EASTER BUNNY—The Mercantile Library is hosting a Wednesday-evening lecture series titled "The Last of the Public Intellectuals: Edmund Wilson and the American Century." This week, Wilson biographer Lewis M. Dabney talks with New York literary critic Alfred Kazin, whom Wilson once invited to his home in order, apparently, to belittle Kazin's book "On Native Grounds" in his presence. The younger critic was not put off by the encounter (though he did say later that Wilson had the "red face of an overfed fox-hunting squire"): he dedicated his book "Contemporaries" to Wilson and wrote in 1952, in these pages, that he could imagine no one else "who so evenly and so hauntingly writes criticism as a work of art." Dabney and Kazin will talk about Wilson in the twenties. (17 E. 47th St. 755-6710. April 12 at 6. The lectures continue through May 24.)

HOP, HOP, HOPPING ALONG—In the annual Radio City Easter Show, the Rockettes, in bellhop costumes and other charming anachronisms, perform their usual eye-high kicks, and the Radio City Easter Rabbit, in a white tux, emerges songfully from a laser tunnel. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. April 12 and April 18 at 11 and 2:30; April 13 at 2:30 and 7:30; April 14 at 7:30; April 15 at noon, 3:30, and 8; and April 16 at 1 and 4:30. Performances continue through April 22.) . . . ¶ April 15 at 11: During the Barnyard Easter Egg Hunt, eggs hidden around one of the few working farms in metropolitan New York will be found, then tossed or rolled. Egg hunters may also fraternize with the farm's baby animals, among whom, of course, they will find the symbol of vernal philoprogenitivity, Whiskers the Bunny. (Queens County Farm Museum, 73-50 Little Neck Parkway, Floral Park, Queens. 1-718 347-3276.) . . . ¶ April 16, from 10 to 3: Participants in the Easter Parade, on Fifth Avenue, can enjoy the frills and bonnets of holiday finery. The Avenue will be closed to traffic from 45th St. to 57th St., and you can start at either end; as the Scarecrow said, "Some people do go both ways."

STANDUP COMEDY—Claes Oldenburg and Coosje Van Bruggen will discuss their collaborative works, which include a forty-nine-foot clothespin, a ninety-six-foot baseball bat, and a twenty-nine-foot maraschino balanced on a fifty-one-foot coffee spoon. The colossal jokesters are married, and their careers reflect both a durable good humor and a skill at negotiation—helpful traits during the various uproars over their outdoor works, such as the flap that preceded the installation of their twenty-eight-foot rubber stamp outside Cleveland's City Hall in 1991. An Oldenburg exhibition currently at the National Gallery comes to the Guggenheim in October. In the meantime, "Large-Scale Projects," a coffee-table book about their work, has recently been published by the Monacelli Press; at nearly twelve pounds, it weighs more than some coffee tables. (Urban Center Books, 457 Madison Ave., at 50th St. April 18 at 6:30. For reservations, call 935-3595.)

LANDSCAPE WITH INFOBAHN—At Cyber Fair for Artists, four technologicians from the on-line-computer circuit—Remo Campopiano, of ArtNet; Stacy Horn, of Echo; David Greene, of ArtsWire; and Wolfgang Stachle, of The Thing—attempt to demystify the information superhighway. Using on-line demonstrations on a ten-foot projection screen, the four will present a guided tour of new markets and mediums, image databases, virtual studios, and electronic salons. (Great Hall, Cooper Union, Third Ave. at 7th St. April 12 at 6. For more information, call 1-718 816-9796.)

READINGS—April 12 at 6:30: Actors choose one tale apiece from "Grace Paley: The Collected Stories" while the author presides. Linda Lavin reads "The Pale Pink Roast," Tandy Cronyn reads "Wants," and Maria Tucci reads "Friends." (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.) . . . ¶ April 17 at 8: Ronald Sukenick hosts the twentieth-anniversary reading of the Fiction Collective, a small press whose editorial hierarchy is modelled on the collective farm. Eurydice, Mark Amerika, Jacques Servin, and Ivan Webster will read from their Collective publications. (St. Mark's In-the-Bouwerie, Second Ave. at 10th St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.) . . . ¶ April 17 at 7:30: Joseph Heller introduces dramatic readings from his first novel, "Catch-22," and its sequel, "Closing Time," which was published last October, thirty-three years later. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 645-5848.) . . . ¶ April 18 at 7: Jim Carroll reads from "The Basketball Diaries," his memoir of growing up on the Lower East Side shooting hoops and heroin. (Tower Books, 383 Lafayette St. No tickets necessary.)

TALKS—April 12 at 6:30: Aesthetician (at Columbia) and art critic (for *The Nation*) Arthur C. Danto and art historian (at Harvard) and cultural critic (for *October*) Yve-Alain Bois consider life after the death of painting. (The Drawing Center, 35 Wooster St. For more information, call 219-2166.) . . . ¶ April 13 at 6:30: Osaka-based architect Michael Anderson, a onetime apprentice of the master carpenter and temple builder Katsuhiro Okumoto, compares the building traditions of the Japanese with those of New England's Shakers. (Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. 752-3015.) . . . ¶ April 13 at 7:30: In her talk "Girls in Science: Are They Still Short-changed?," Susan Bailey, from Wellesley College's Center for Research on Women, reviews the data on schoolgirl participation in science classes. (New York Academy of Sciences, 2 E. 63rd St. For more information, call 838-0230, ext. 234.) . . . ¶ April 17 at 8: Novelists George Garrett (who wrote a trilogy set in the Elizabethan era), Patrick O'Brian (who specializes in naval novels set during the Napoleonic Wars), and Mary Lee Settle (whose cycle, "The Beulah Quintet," tells of the settling of West Virginia) read from their work and discuss factual imagination in historical fiction. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 996-1100.)

WALKS—April 15 at 1:30: Adventure on a Shoestring visits Little Odessa, the Russian-Jewish enclave in Brighton Beach, which was named for its likeness to the Ukrainian port on the Black Sea. For more information, call 265-2663. . . . ¶ April 16 at 1: A tour of the spring highlights at the Brooklyn Botanical Garden takes in jonquils, coreopsis, star magnolias, and the borough's official flower, the forsythia. For more information, call 1-718 622-4433, ext. 215.

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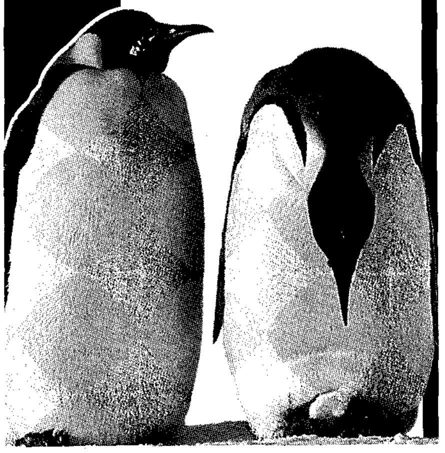


THE MOVIES

FILMS OPENING THIS WEEK

Blessing—As the twenty-three-year-old daughter of a Wisconsin dairy farmer, Melora Griffis must choose between the love of the local milkman (Gareth Williams) and the love of her family, in a drama written and directed by Paul Zehrer. Opening April 12. (Angelika 57.)

Clean, Shaven—A psychological horror film about a schizophrenic (Peter Greene) searching for his daughter (Jennifer MacDonald). Written and directed by Lodge H. Kerrigan. Opening April 14. (Quad Cinema.)

The Cormorant—Ralph Fiennes and Helen Schlesinger star in Peter Markham's 1993 BBC thriller, about a couple who discover that the cottage they've inherited in Wales comes with a malevolent waterfowl. Written by Peter Ransley, from Stephen Gregory's 1986 novel of the same name. Opening April 12. (Little Theatre.)

Fun—Two teen-age girls (Renée Humphrey and Alicia Witt), who become friends at a suburban bus stop, spend a day together shopping, talking, and killing. With Leslie Hope as a counselor and William R. Moses as a tabloid reporter. Directed by Rafael Zelinsky. Written by James Bosley, from his 1988 drama. Opening April 12. (Film Forum.)

Jury Duty—A comedy in which Pauly Shore fulfills his civic obligation. With Tia Carrere, Brian Doyle-Murray, Stanley Tucci, and Abe Vigoda. Directed by John Fortenberry. Written by Neil Tolkin, Barbara Williams, and Samantha Adams. Opening April 12. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, Orpheum VII, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

The Pebble and the Penguin—Martin Short, James Belushi, Tim Curry, and Annie Golden provide the voices for an animated musical about young penguins in love. Written by Rachel Koretsky and Steve Whitestone. Opening April 12. (Manhattan Twin, First & 62nd Cinemas, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Art Greenwich Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Red Firecracker, Green Firecracker—An epic set in early-twentieth-century China, about a nineteen-year-old woman (Ning Jing) who has been raised as a man because she is the sole heir to a fireworks empire, and the artist (Wu Gang) she falls in love with. Directed by He Ping. Adapted by Da Ying from the novel by Feng Jicai. In Mandarin. Opening April 14. (Quad Cinema and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Stuart Saves His Family—Harold Ramis directed this "Saturday Night Life" spinoff, starring Al Franken as the host of the public-access TV show "Daily Affirmations." With Laura San Giacomo and Vincent D'Onofrio. Written by Franken. Opening April 12. (Village Theatre VII, New York Twin, East 85th Street, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Embassy 1.)

CURRENT FILMS

(The signed notes are by Bruce Diones, Sarah Kerr, Anthony Lane, and Terrence Rafferty. If a movie has been reviewed in The Current Cinema, the date of its review is given. Theatre addresses and phone numbers are listed on page 28.)

Amateur—A comedy written and directed by Hal Hartley. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Angelika Film Center and Lincoln Square.)

Bad Boys—A potential money factory from Don Simpson and Jerry Bruckheimer (the producers of the "Beverly Hills Cop" movies), starring Martin Lawrence and Will Smith as a pair of Miami detectives who have four days to prevent a huge heroin score. The casting is shrewd—the two leads are relaxed and funny together—but nervous: Lawrence, known for his physical and often sexually explicit comedy, plays a timid and faithful husband, while polite, sweet-faced Smith plays an oversexed loose cannon. The car chases are unimpeachable. With Téa Leoni in a lame-duck role as a material witness. Written by Michael Barrie, Jim Mulholland, and Doug Richardson; directed by Michael Bay.—S.K. (Village Theatre VII, Gemini, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, 84th Street Sixplex, and National Twin.)

Bar Girls—A seriocomic look at a love affair between two women (Nancy Allison Wolfe and Liza D'Agostino) who frequent the same neighborhood bar. Directed by Marita Giovanni. (Quad Cinema and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

Blue Sky—The last movie directed by Tony Richardson—he died shortly after completing it, in 1991—is a fitting end to his long, erratically brilliant career. The picture is set in the early sixties. Tommy Lee Jones plays a quiet Army scientist assigned to a nuclear-testing project; Jessica Lange plays his volatile wife, to whom he is utterly, incomprehensibly devoted. Both actors are extraordinary; Lange's performance might be her best. The action feels contrived and a little fuzzy in the last half hour, but the movie is so strong that its flaws don't seem to matter. Richardson frames his stars' work with a mysterious tenderness, as if to reward them for vindicating his lifelong faith in the actor's art. His direction is a touching embodiment of the movie's theme: the rigors and the joys of constancy.—T.R. (10/3/94) (Village Theatre VII and Tower East.)

Born to Be Wild—The story of a fourteen-year-old boy (Wil Horneff) who befriends a three-year-old captive gorilla. Directed by John Gray. (Village East Cinemas, Orpheum VII, and Lincoln Square.)

Bulletproof Heart—Anthony LaPaglia stars as a hit man who, between dusk and sunrise, falls in love with the woman he has been assigned to kill (Mimi Rogers). Directed by Mark Malone. (Cinema Village.)

Circle of Friends—Although there isn't anything startlingly original in this tale of three Catholic girls falling in love in late-fifties Ireland, it gets a sweet telling in Pat O'Connor's pretty film. The first half, in particular, is amiable and well acted, especially by Minnie Driver, as the big, soft girl who lands the cute boy (Chris O'Donnell), and by Alan Cumming, who gives a funny, slithering performance as the opportunist who competes for her affections. The second half piles on the drama and gets mired in low-key intrigues. Still, there's a nice lilt to the proceedings.—B.D. (19th Street East 6, Coronet, Waverly, and 84th Street Sixplex.)

Dolores Claiborne—The title character of Taylor Hackford's film is a middle-aged Maine housekeeper (Kathy Bates) who is suspected of having killed her boss and—years ago—her husband. The screenplay, by Tony Gilroy, reinforces the structure of Stephen King's rambling novel to make it a sturdier vehicle for conventional dramatic tension. The story moves forward smoothly, but the pace is too even and the course is predictable. And Jennifer Jason Leigh, as the heroine's sullen, petulant daughter, plays her scenes with a morose intensity that seems to suck the energy out of the picture. Bates is superb, and the dark-toned cinematography (by Gabriel Beristain) is evocative, but by the end you feel about the movie the way Dolores feels about her life: that it looked good for a while and then somehow went terribly wrong. Also with Christopher Plummer, Judy Parfitt, David Strathairn, and Ellen Muth.—T.R. (4/3/95) (Village Theatre VII, 34th St. East, Baronet, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Lincoln Square, and Criterion Center.)

Don Juan DeMarco—A young man in a mask (Johnny Depp), who calls himself Don Juan and has been seducing every woman in sight, is put under the care of a psychiatrist (Marlon Brando); the doctor tries at first to cure the youth of his illusion and then begins to wonder whether there might be something to it. The writer and director, Jeremy Leven—himself a former shrink—has taken a heavy conceit and lightened it into comedy, which is what it deserves. Rather charmingly, he falls into the same trap the doctor does, lingering over flashbacks of Juan's carnal past as if to bolster their claim to reality. The movie looks too soft for its own good, and it's far too tasteful to turn anybody on, but Depp's placid sweetness keeps it pleasant, and Brando, realizing that there is fun to be had here, enjoys himself hugely—especially in his scenes with Faye Dunaway, who plays his wife. In defiance of the laws of gravity, the big man rises to the occasion and lifts the movie with him.—A.L. (4/10/95) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, Cinema I, Orpheum VII, and Lincoln Square.)

Exotica—A mysterious search through tall grass; a strip joint where the girls weave, untouchable, in front of the customers; a pet store drowning in hot green light: yes, it's the world according to Atom Egoyan. The plot is so closely woven that it verges on the incestuous. Having lost a daughter, Francis (Bruce Greenwood) finds a substitute in Christina (Mia Kirshner), a young dancer who dresses like a schoolgirl; after he runs into trouble with her, he enlists the help of a gay egg smuggler (don't ask) played by Don McKellar. The actors have to flatten their performances to match the weirdness—the occasional trill of guilt and rage feels about as spontaneous as an alarm clock. The movie is lush, enraptured, and almost no fun at all. It dances in front of us with the erotic blankness of Christina at Francis's table.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center, Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

Farinelli—This saga of a famous eighteenth-century castrato and his dependent brother, a minor composer, is meant to have a tawdry kick, but the story wanders into a dark corner only intermittently—mostly when it's time for sex. The bulk of the film is really concerned with the fact that this genius has to sing his brother's crummy operas. Since the two of them dress so flamboyantly, live like aristocrats, and behave like spoiled children, it's hard to take their problems seriously. The director, Gérard Corbiau, delivers a sumptuously photographed film, and Stefano Dionisi's androgynous looks are just right for the title character, but his singing voice (borrowed and electronically enhanced) sounds too disembodied, and his lip-synching doesn't help. In French.—B.D. (Village East Cinemas and Lincoln Square.)

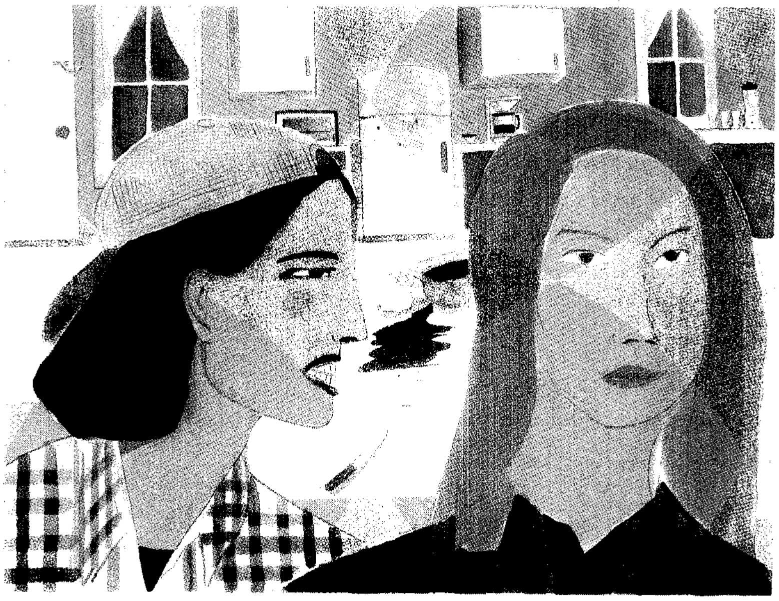
Funny Bones—Peter Chelsom's second film is a comedy about comedy, which picks up where his first, "Hear My Song" (1991), left off. This is not good news. The earlier picture pushed the gentle, lyrical style of Bill Forsyth right to the edge of bearable whimsy; in the new movie Chelsom sails over the brink, like Thelma and Louise, and his free fall seems to take an eternity. This film features rueful mimes, slick Las Vegas comedians, decrepit English music-hall performers, a French chanteuse of a certain age, and cute foreign-accented smugglers who traffic in a powder that confers eternal youth; most of the action takes place in Blackpool, a garishly seedy English resort town. The characters and the setting may suggest a Fellini version of "The Entertainer," but the movie is worse than that. Its air of carnival poignance is excruciating; if anyone ever decides to remake "King of Hearts," Chelsom is clearly the man for the job. With Oliver Platt, Jerry Lewis, Lee Evans, and Leslie Caron.—T.R. (Village East Cinemas.)

A Goofy Movie—Disney's long-eared dog gets his own animated feature. Directed by Kevin Lima. (Village East Cinemas, Sutton, 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Guild, and Lincoln Square.)

I Am Cuba—Mikhail Kalatozov's 1964 propaganda epic, just now getting its American theatrical première, is an amazing artifact: the director and his cinematographer, Sergei Urusevsky, bombard the audience with one deliriously inventive shot after another. Yevgeny Yevtushenko and Enrique Pineda Barnet's screenplay, which consists of four folktales from the bad old days of the Batista regime linked by picturesque montages and ripe prose poetry read in voice-over, is essentially a paean to Fidel Castro. Despite the solemnity, the movie feels as silly as a Vegas illusionist's act; you gape and giggle as Kalatozov makes history disappear. In Spanish, Russian, and English.—T.R. (3/20/95) (Film Forum 3.)

Jefferson in Paris—Nick Nolte stars as the widowed statesman during his ambassadorship to France in the seventeen-eighties. Directed by James Ivory. (Paris.)

The Last Good Time—A retired violinist (Armin Mueller-Stahl) provides shelter for a young woman (Olivia d'Abo) who has been thrown



At Film Forum, Renée Humphrey and Alicia Witt in "Fun."

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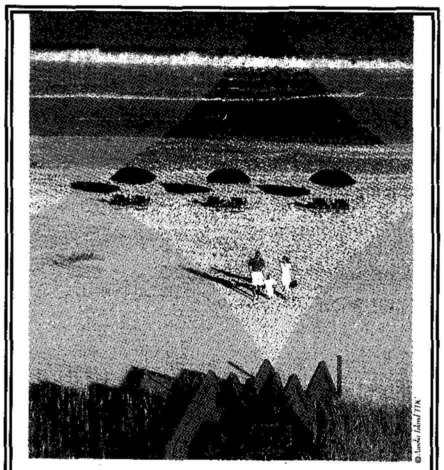

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out of her boyfriend's apartment. With Maureen Stapleton and Lionel Stander (in his last screen role). Directed by Bob Balaban. (68th St. Playhouse.)

Losing Isaiah—Stanley Kramer-style drool about a black crack addict (Halle Berry) who leaves her baby in a cardboard box, and the white social worker (Jessica Lange) who adopts him. Several years later, the biological mother, now reformed, wants her child back, and it's off to the courtroom for a deadly can-a-white-family-raise-a-black-child disputation. The performances, at least, rise above the paint-by-numbers screenplay; David Strathairn is especially good as Lange's husband. Earnestly directed by Stephen Gyllenhaal.—B.D. (Manhattan Twin and Lincoln Square.)

The Madness of King George—Alan Bennett's stage play has moved to the screen, with the same star (Nigel Hawthorne), the same director (Nicholas Hytner), and the same story, about the King of England's decline, in the years 1788-89, from cheerful disciplinarian to lewd, unsleeping ranter. It's a fine dramatic predicament—and that's how it stays, never really pressing forward or pulling us into a plot. But there is plenty of relish here—in Ian Holm's fierce turn as a country physician, and in Hawthorne's blend of thundering and whimpers.—A.L. (1/16/94) (Angelika Film Center, First & 62nd Cinemas, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Major Payne—Damon Wayans plays an officer in charge of a group of rowdy military-school cadets, in a comedy directed by Nick Castle. (59th Street East Cinema, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Olympia, and National Twin.)

Martha and I—Jiří Weiss, an octogenarian Czech filmmaker who has lived in the United States since 1969, tells a story that's based on his own memories of the dark years leading up to the Second World War, and his leisurely, sensual, tragicomic style evokes Czech cinema in the brief period of freedom that preceded the Soviet crackdown in 1968. The movie focusses on the unusual, doomed marriage of an educated Czech Jew (Michel Piccoli) and his German housekeeper (Marianne Sägebrecht). Weiss's manner is graceful and resolutely unsentimental. And Piccoli gives an extraordinarily touching performance. He's the soul of the movie: the gleam of lechery in his eyes seems to express everything the director has stubbornly continued to believe in—the remembered sweetness of life before catastrophe. Also with Václav Chalupa and Ondřej Vetchý. In German.—T.R. (4/3/95) (Quad Cinema.)

Muriel's Wedding—Toni Collette plays Muriel, the shyest member of a bored and bulbous family living in Porpoise Spit, Australia. Her only resource is old Abba tapes, her only dream to marry; the identity of the bridegroom is immaterial. P. J. Hogan's directorial début is being sold as a feel-good picture in the same groove as "Strictly Ballroom," but there's a major difference: Hogan's movie doesn't feel good for long. The loud and lurid comedy, verging on caricature, soon grows bleak with bad news—divorce, cancer, suicide—none of which deepens the film; they just turn it into a downer. But the fine, edgy performances by Collette and Rachel Griffiths, as her best friend, keep things afloat.—A.L. (Village East Cinemas, 19th Street East 6, Murray Hill Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, 86th Street East Twin, and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas.)

Once Were Warriors—Jake (Temuera Morrison) says he loves Beth (Rena Owen), which seems to involve getting drunk and thumping her, with frequent interludes for swearing and sex. Beth swears back with double the venom, but gradually admits to herself that it's time she took the children and got out of the house. Lee Tamahori's début picture marks the first attempt in New Zealand cinema to confront the quandaries of modern Maori life. It's a strong subject, but the film is packed so tight with the importance of its mission that it leaves all subtlety behind—it rants at the audience with the same blind fury that powers most of the characters. The relentlessness winds you up and sends you nowhere.—A.L. (Angelika Film Center and Cinema 3.)

Outbreak—Wolfgang Petersen's biohazard thriller is a textbook example of Hollywood's ability to make something new look very old and very familiar. The screenplay invents a rain-forest virus called Motaba, which migrates from Zaire and runs amok in a Northern California town. But the filmmakers keep it contained—locked into an action-movie structure that reduces an unsettling subject to a predictable this-time-it's-personal conflict between a good-guy scientist (Dustin Hoffman) and a bad-guy general (Donald Sutherland).—T.R. (3/20/95) (Village Theatre VII, 19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Lincoln Square, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

Priest—Young Father Greg (Linus Roache) arrives in Liverpool ready to spread the word, but there are serious obstacles to his zeal: a laid-back, liberal colleague (Tom Wilkinson); a Catholic population that doesn't want to hear about original sin; and his own furtive homosexuality. Just when it seems that his troubles can't get worse, a young girl who is being abused by her father comes to him, and, forbidden to break the confidence of the confessional, he feels powerless to help her. The movie, written by Jimmy McGovern and directed, somewhat hysterically, by Antonia Bird, is almost comically determined to pile on the big issues and ethical wranglings that face the modern clergy. Angry and unfair, it wants to expose the hypocrisy of the Church without bothering to show how the institution really works.—A.L. (3/27/95) (Angelika Film Center, Cinema II, Chelsea Cinemas, and Lincoln Square.)

Rob Roy—Liam Neeson and Jessica Lange star in an adventure movie directed by Michael Caton-Jones. (Reviewed this week in The Current Cinema.) (Village Theatre VII, 34th Street Showplace, Beekman, Orpheum VII, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, Lincoln Square, and Metro Cinema.)

Tank Girl—Lori Petty does her tough-talking best to breathe some life into the comic-book action, but it's not enough. The film, which bursts into musical numbers and animation from time to time, is meant to be anarchic, and there are some fun bits (Tank Girl's knee pads are made from crushed doll heads), but, like some other daredevil misfires ("The Adventures of Buckaroo Banzai," "Earth Girls Are Easy"), it's underwritten and overdirected. It concerns a future in which water is power, and it's as dry as dust. With Malcolm McDowell, Naomi Watts, and Ice T. Directed by Rachel Talalay. Written by Tedi Sarafian, from the British comic-book series by Jamie Hewlett and Alan Martin.—B.D. (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 19th Street East 6, Manhattan Twin, and Criterion Center.)

Tommy Boy—The slow but earnest heir to a small-town Ohio auto-parts business (Chris Farley) wrestles with his new stepmother (Bo Derek) and her son (Rob Lowe) for control of the family business, in a comedy directed by Peter Segal. (19th Street East 6, 34th Street Showplace, New York Twin, Orpheum VII, Art Greenwich Twin, 84th Street Sixplex, and Astor Plaza.)

ALSO PLAYING

BEFORE THE RAIN (reviewed in our issue of 3/13/95): Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **BILLY MADISON**: Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **THE BRADY BUNCH MOVIE**: Manhattan Twin. . . . **BULLETS OVER BROADWAY** (10/24/94): Waverly. . . . **BYE BYE, LOVE**: Gotham Cinema and 62nd & Broadway. . . . **DISCLOSURE** (12/19/94): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **DOCTOR ZHIVAGO**: Lincoln Square. . . . **DUMB AND DUMBER**: Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **FORREST GUMP** (7/25/94): Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gemini, Lincoln Square, and Embassy. . . . **A GREAT DAY IN HARLEM** (reviewed in the Jazz column, 1/23/95): Quad Cinema. . . . **HIDEAWAY**: Criterion Center. . . . **HOOP DREAMS** (10/17/94): Plaza and 23rd St. West Triplex. . . . **IMMORTAL BELOVED**: Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **JUST CAUSE**: Lincoln Square. . . . **MRS. PARKER AND THE VICIOUS CIRCLE** (12/12/94): Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **PULP FICTION** (10/10/94): Village East Cinemas, First & 62nd Cinemas, 57th Street Playhouse, 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy. . . . **QUEEN MARGOT**: Village East Cinemas. . . . **RED** (11/28/94): Quad Cinema and Carnegie Hall Cinemas. . . . **THE SECRET OF ROAN INISH**: Angelika Film Center and Eastside Cinema. . . . **THE SHAWSHANK REDEMPTION** (9/26/94): Regency, Olympia, and Criterion Center. . . . **STRAWBERRY AND CHOCOLATE**: Village East Cinemas and Lincoln Plaza Cinemas. . . . **THE SUM OF US**: Worldwide Cinemas. . . . **TOM AND VIV** (12/12/94): Cinema 3rd Avenue. . . . **THE WILD BUNCH** (3/6/95): Village East Cinemas.

THEATRE ADDRESSES

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EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000).
Little Theatre, Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171).
Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th (477-6600).
Village Theatre VII, 3rd Ave. at 11th (982-0400).
Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th (924-3363).
Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th (529-6799).
19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th (260-8000).
Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th (689-6548).
34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th (532-5544).
34th St. East, 241 E. 34th (683-0255).
Eastside Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 55th (755-3020).
Sutton 1 and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th (759-1411).
Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th (759-2262).
Plaza, 42 E. 58th (355-3320).
Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th (935-6420).
59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th (759-4630).
Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th (355-1663).
Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th (753-6022).
First & 62nd Cinemas, 400 E. 62nd (513-5408).
Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th (832-1670).
Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th (737-2622).
New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th (744-7339).
68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th (734-0302).
Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st (879-1313).
East 85th Street, 1st Ave. at 85th (249-5100).
Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th (534-1880).
Orpheum VII, 3rd Ave. at 86th (876-2400).
86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th (249-1144).

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110).
Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd (929-8037).
Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th (929-3350).
Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th (255-8800).
Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd (513-5402).
23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd (989-0060).
Guild, 33 W. 50th (757-2406).
Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St., between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583).
Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th (765-7600).
57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th (581-7360).
Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th (265-2520).
Angelika 57, 225 W. 57th (586-1900).
Paris, 4 W. 58th (980-5656).
Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th (752-5959).
62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd (265-7466).
Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd (757-2280).
Regency, B'way at 67th (724-3700).
Lincoln Square, B'way at 68th (336-5000).
84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th (877-3600).
Thalia, B'way at 95th (316-4962).
Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th (222-1200).
Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th (865-8128).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th (354-0900).
Embassy 1, B'way at 46th (302-0494).
Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th (730-7262).
Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way (869-8340).
National Twin, B'way at 44th (869-0950).

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"Once, I carried concrete paving blocks."

– Attache of Terry C. Plauché,
Landscape Architect,
Mobile, Alabama

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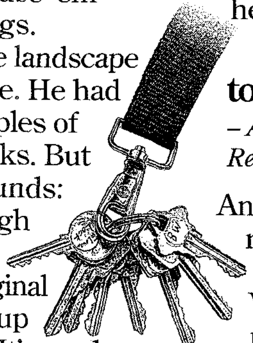

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– Attache of Leah Witzig, Quiltmaker,
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REVIVALS

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow. Theatre addresses and phone numbers appear with the listings following these notes.)

Desert Hearts (1985)—A fifties lesbian romance about an uptight Columbia University professor (Helen Shaver) who finds love with a wild sculptor (Patricia Charbonneau) while waiting for a divorce in Reno. It has the dude-ranch setting of "The Women" and some of the bitchiness, too, but in this movie the banter is comic relief to a slogging story of sexual awakening—the only suspense comes from wondering when (not even whether) Shaver and Charbonneau will get it on. Charbonneau provides little more than a succession of naked, yearning expressions. At least Shaver brings force to her character's clenched emotions: with her fair-haired lustre and her throatiness, she's like Joan Fontaine soaked in tequila. Natalie Cooper adapted Jane Rule's novel; Donna Deitch directed.—M.S. (A Different Light Bookstore; April 15.)

Lillian Russell (1940)—Alice Faye, overblown to vacuous perfection, and likable despite it all, wears gigantic hats; the headgear is about the only connection this scrubbed-up bio has with the actual Lillian Russell. After she becomes the rage of London and New York, all sorts of generous people—Diamond Jim Brady (Edward Arnold) among them—just keep sending her diamonds and emeralds. Love comes into her life when Henry Fonda rescues her and her Grandma (Helen Westley) from a team of runaway horses. A mixture of musical numbers; with Weber and Fields as themselves and Eddie Foy, Jr., as Eddie Foy, Sr. (who, one hopes, was better).—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; April 14-15.)

Mary Poppins (1964)—This mostly live-action musical jamboree was the biggest hit of Walt Disney's producing career; its mix of nostalgia, contemporaneity, and novelty-song comedy presages the Disney studio's cartoon features of the nineties. In this version of the P. L. Travers stories, supernanny Mary Poppins (Julie Andrews) blows into an Edwardian household in order to bring the children (Karen Dotrice and Matthew Garber) closer to their lordly, oblivious father (David Tomlinson) and distracted suffragette mother (Glynis Johns). Andrews' Poppins is one elusive heroine: to sugarcoat her despotism, she just keeps pulling surprises out of her carpetbag of tricks. As her co-conspirator, the Jack-of-all-trades Bert, Dick Van Dyke commits charming larceny whenever he's onscreen. Despite his weird Cockney accent and winking style, he's out there as a playmate and a pal, and when he dances, his limber, angular physicality becomes exhilarating as well as hilarious. Richard M. and Robert B. Sherman wrote the songs; Bill Walsh and Don DaGradi wrote the script. Robert Stevenson directed.—M.S. (American Museum of the Moving Image; April 15-16.)

Mountains of the Moon (1990)—An awfully strange movie by Bob Rafelson, about an 1857 expedition to discover the source of the Nile, and the subsequent feud between the explorers, Richard Burton (Patrick Bergin) and John Hanning Speke (Iain Glen). Burton, a dashing intellectual adventurer, was in some ways ahead of his time; Rafelson distorts history to make Burton seem entirely a man of *our* time—the enlightened opposite of all the Victorian values and mores we now reject. He and his cinematographer, Roger Deakins, give the film a wonderful look: during the explorers' arduous trek we often feel, despite everything that's going wrong, that we're on the verge of seeing something amazing. But, whatever it might be, it remains just over the horizon.—T.R. (Museum of Modern Art; April 13 and 16.)

My Night at Maud's (1969)—In a period when makers of tony romantic comedies were scrambling for credible ways to delay their characters' making love, the austere French writer-director Eric Rohmer, doing what came naturally, hit on religious scruples. His Catholic hero (Jean-Louis Trintignant), steeped in Pascal, bets that holding out for his ideal—blonde, also Catholic—will have a better payoff than dallying with the raven-tressed nonbeliever Maud (Françoise Fabian). The movie's centerpiece and high point *is* his night at Maud's, a chaste yet ticklish probing of male emotions and convictions. Rohmer and Trintignant create a man who's so fixed on a mental image that he can't appreciate what's in his grasp. While the pale beauty played by Marie-Christine Barrault fits his ideal, it's Maud—initially intriguing, ultimately haunting—who leaves vibrations in her wake, partly because Fabian is so flesh-tingling and sophisticated. Nestor Almendros did the peerless, sensuous black-and-white cinematography. In French.—M.S. (Florence Gould Hall; April 18.)

The Truck (1977)—There are only two people in this film: Marguerite Duras and Gérard Depardieu, and they sit at a round table in a room in her home, and never leave it. Serene, half-smiling, she reads aloud the script of a film in which Depardieu would act the role of a truck driver who picks up a woman hitchhiker. The film alternates between sequences in the room and sequences of a rolling truck, seen always at a distance. Each time Duras cuts from the room to the truck, we're drawn into the hypnotic flow of the road imagery, and each time she pulls us back into the room we feel an emotional wrench, a rude awakening. Her picture has been thought out with such supple discrimination between the values of sound and image that you could almost say it's *perfectly* made—an ornery, glimmering achievement. In French.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; April 14.)

Vampyr (1932)—Most vampire movies are so silly that this film by Carl Dreyer—a great vampire film—hardly belongs to the genre. Dreyer preys upon our subconscious fears. Dread and obsession are the film's substance, and its mood is evocative, dreamy, spectral. Death hovers over everyone. The cast is headed by Julian West (the movie name of Nicholas de Gunzburg), with Henriette Gérard as the vampire, and Rena Mandel and Sybille Schmitz as her potential victims. The incomparable photographic effects are the work of Rudolph Maté. Movie-lovers may cherish what appears to be Dreyer's homage to Cocteau—the use of the little heart from "The Blood of a Poet." In German.—P.K. (Anthology Film Archives; April 15.)

LATE RUNS, CLASSICS, ETC.

(Titles with a dagger are reviewed above.)

Film Forum 2 and 3, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)—**Theatre 2:** Films by the team of Michael Powell and Emeric Pressburger. Through April 13: "Gone to Earth" (1950) and "The Elusive Pimpernel" (1950). . . . From April 14: "A Matter of Life and Death" (1946). . . . **Theatre 3:** "Mamma Roma" (1962, Pier Paolo Pasolini; in Italian) and "I Am Cuba" (†).

Lincoln Plaza Cinemas, B'way at 63rd St. (757-2280)—The first program in a five-month showing of films by the great Indian filmmaker Satyajit Ray. Through April 20: "Pather Panchali" (1954, in Bengali).

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9480)—April 13 at 1:30: Chapters 1-15 of the film serial "Dick Tracy's G-Man" (1939, William Witney and John English). . . . ¶ April 13 at 3 and 6: "The Power of Conscience: The Danish Resistance and the Rescue of the Jews" (1994, Alexandra Moltke Isles). . . . ¶ April 13 at 6:30 and April 16 at 2: "Mountains of the Moon" (†). . . . ¶ April 14 at 2:30 and April 15 at 2: "Lillian Russell" (†). . . . ¶ April 14 at 6: "The Truck" (†). . . . ¶ April 14 at 6:30: "The Barefoot Contessa" (1954, Joseph L. Mankiewicz). . . . ¶ April 15 at 2:30: "Les Enfants" (1984, Marguerite Duras; in French). . . . ¶ April 15 at 5: "A Room with a View" (1986, James Ivory). . . . ¶ April 15 at 5: "Hiroshima, Mon Amour" (1959, Alain Resnais; in French). . . . ¶ April 16 at 2:30: "Une Aussi Longue Absence" (1961, Henri Colpi; in French). . . . ¶ April 16 at 5: "Natural Born Killers" (1994, Oliver Stone). . . . ¶ April 16 at 5: "Monderato Cantabile" (1960, Peter Brook; in French). . . . ¶ April 17 at 2:30: "The Browning Version" (1951, Anthony Asquith). . . . ¶ April 17 at 6: "The Left Handed Gun" (1958, Arthur Penn). . . . ¶ April 17 at 6:30: A program of films by Barbara Hammer. . . . ¶ April 18 at 2:30: "The Birth of a Nation" (1915, D. W. Griffith). . . . ¶ April 18 at 6: "The Gold Rush" (1925, Charlie Chaplin).

Walter Reade Theatre, Lincoln Center, 165 W. 65th St., plaza level (875-5600)—A series of Soviet films from the glasnost era (1985-91). . . . ¶ April 15-16 at 2: "The Beast from 20,000 Fathoms" (1953, Eugene Lourie).

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria (1-718 784-0077)—April 15-16 at 2: "Mary Poppins" (†). . . . ¶ April 18 at 2: "The Wizard of Oz" (1939, Victor Fleming), with Judy Garland.

A Different Light Bookstore, 151 W. 19th St. (989-4850)—A Saturday-and-Sunday-night series of free films (and popcorn). On April 15 at 7, the feature will be "Desert Hearts" (†). On April 16 at 7, the feature will be "Black Lizard" (1968, Kinji Fukasaku; in Japanese).

Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—April 18 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:15: "My Night at Maud's" (†).

Brooklyn Museum, 200 Eastern Parkway (1-718 638-5000)—A program of recent Italian films. April 14 at 7: "A Soul Divided in Two" (1992, Silvio Soldini). . . . ¶ April 15 at 2: "The Neapolitan Mathematician" (1992, Mario Martone). . . . ¶ April 15 at 7: "The Red Dove" (1989, Nanni Moretti).

Anthology Film Archives, 32 Second Ave., at 2nd St. (505-5181)—April 14 at 8 and April 15 at 6: Programs 4 and 5 from Bruce Elder's "The Book of All the Dead," a thirty-two-hour cycle of films. . . . ¶ April 15 at 4: "The First Son" (1984, Lee Doo-yong). . . . ¶ April 15 at 9:30: "Vampyr" (†).

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-3676)—The 1995 Biennial Exhibition, presenting films and videos from the past two years. Call for schedule and screening times.

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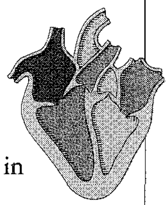
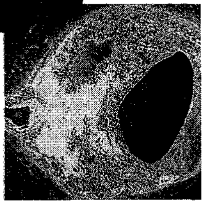
LDL CHOLESTEROL IS A TIME BOMB THAT CAN BURST INTO A HEART ATTACK. IS THERE ANY WAY TO STOP IT?

New drug therapies may be able to stymie the artery-clogging oxidation of LDL cholesterol and prevent heart attacks.



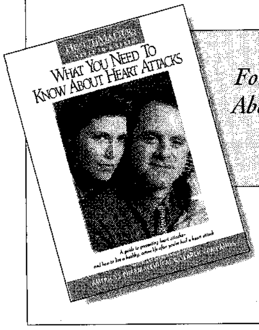
Scientists from pharmaceutical research companies discover more than 9 out of 10 new drugs.



For years, LDL cholesterol has been the major suspect in heart disease. Finally, researchers are beginning to understand why. Once oxidized, LDL cholesterol becomes a powerful lure, attracting other cells. Eventually, these microscopic clumps grow to become artery clogging plaque. This can lead to atherosclerosis, the disease that causes 97% of all heart attacks that occur in men and women in the United States. Can anything be done? There is hope. Right now, pharmaceutical company researchers are testing drugs that may be able to stop the oxidation process of LDL cholesterol. In all, pharmaceutical companies are currently developing 86 new medicines to treat or prevent heart disease.

prevention

Anyone can have a heart attack. But age, gender and heredity are major factors in determining overall risk. Fortunately, there are other risks that you can do something about. People who smoke, have elevated cholesterol, high blood pressure and don't exercise are eight times more likely to develop heart disease. Other contributing factors include obesity, diabetes and stress. To lower your risks: Quit smoking • Exercise regularly • Maintain a low fat diet • Lower your cholesterol levels • Get regular medical checkups.



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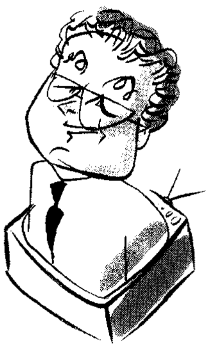
THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

HOWARD STRINGER'S GLOBAL VILLAGE

HOWARD STRINGER, the television executive, seemed to be the only cheerful and relaxed participant in last week's *Variety*-cum-Wertheim Schroder-sponsored panel discussion tabbed "Mixing It Up: The Networks, the Telcos, Cable, and the Programmers," held in the Pierre ballroom, in front of eight hundred media- and money-obsessed sub-executives. The umbrella name of the conference was "The Business of Entertainment: The Big Picture." Among the masters present were an impressive number of chairmen and C.E.O.s from the alphabetical universe: TBS, TCI, F.C.C., ABC, NBC, HBO, NYNEX, MCA. Stringer—who forty days earlier had quit his job as president of the CBS/Broadcast Group to take on, as chairman and C.E.O., a new company formed by Bell Atlantic, NYNEX, and Pacific Telesis—was identified in press material as "NEW MEDIA CONSORTIUM HEAD." He listened attentively as his fellow-panelists talked, somewhat petulantly, about the Sturm und Drang of the nerve-racking new technologies and competition therefrom. "For me, at fifty-three, this is the stuff that dreams are made of," Stringer, who was born in Cardiff, Wales, and has an Oxford M.A. in modern history, said exuberantly. "At the moment, I'm the chief executive of a phone booth. But the possibilities of the programming! Developing a traditional but interactive program. Going into thirty million homes. Finding the true niches, to put the arts back into art and entertainment. Taking an occasional crack at culture with a small 'c.' "



ILLUSTRATIONS BY TOM BACHTELL

AGAINST a backdrop of *Variety* headlines—"NETLETS VOW TO BE TENACIOUS," "TOPS TURV TV BIZ TAKES STOCK," "BUYING BINGE BECKONS"—each of the other speakers, with a near-overwhelming use of clubby jargon (and much turning of adjectives into verbs), went on talking about: how digital technology will obsolete other technology; cost advantage of electronic services to the home; user-friendly advantage of digital satellite systems; more lines of resolution and better sound; interacting with Nipper and Chipper; do we go coaxial or fibre to the curb?; the threat of new wiring; the no-threat of new wiring, because of the ten years it will take to wire seventy per cent of the country; government regulatory concerns are a very, very, very big deal; if I am a content provider, am I "Elsie the cow"?; telecommunications is very, very, very competitive, so we must expand globally into other markets; we have to reinvent ourselves, but life gets in the way.

At the end of the panelling, Stringer was surrounded by a few admirers, and he told them, happily, "Nobody knows what I do, so it's easy for me to do it. I don't have a name yet for the company. I have a conference call later with the C.A.A. people who helped create it, and maybe we'll get a name. I just got my secretary back yesterday. I'm catching a flight to Seattle this afternoon to make a speech to the Northwest Boardroom Forum, and then I fly to L.A. and will have an 8 A.M. meeting with the transition team and see my new offices, at Century Park East, and then I fly up to Napa, to the Silverado Country Club and Resort, for another speech, to the Pacific Telesis senior executives. There's this tremendous impetus to fill the state of programming. I'll take it one step at a time."

One of his fellow-panelists walked by, threw Stringer a stiff grin, and said, "Most of us have been on the same panels for years, each of us promoting his own image, eh?"

"Well, not exactly," Stringer said, and turned back to his admirers. "Network television by itself isn't enough," he told them. "Cable is trapped by economics and endless repetition. I've never been mesmerized by technology, but interactive television may be truly empowering. We don't need all these repeats. One opera. One reading of poetry. I'd like to have Dylan Thomas read. Interactivity may be, as I plan to say in Seattle, the magic that brings us together crossing national boundaries faster than light—the social glue in the global village." Stringer laughed. "I'm in a position now to say what I think," he said. "It's great to be free."

SCOFFLAW SMOKERS

EVERYBODY knows smoking is indefensible. However, some smokers will defend the indefensible eternally. As a bowler smoking on a settee at Leisure Time Bowling Center in the Port Authority Bus Terminal said cheerfully, "Smoking's good for me. It's something to do. You know Noah, who built the Ark? It's in the Book of Genesis. He was smoking when he built the Ark." Well . . .

Then, there is a population for whom illicitness gives smoking a still greater purpose. As of April 10th, when New York City's Smoke-Free Air Act goes into effect and the mild thrill of lingering over legal after-dinner cigarettes in restaurants is extinguished, we will witness the jolt of the taboo. According to Lloyd Feit, the chef-owner of the downtown bistro Café Loup, where most of the regulars smoke, when smoking is allowed only in the bar area or in a special lounge "it's going to be a different kind of cigarette. Like suckin' on it real hard." Feit was putting words to what an informal survey of smoking New Yorkers suggests will be a highly prevalent, if subversive, response to the Smoke-Free Air Act: "I think smoking in the bathroom is gonna be *huge*. We're all going to be back in school again, like little boys in thick smoke."

A casual young woman wearing dark-red lipstick and black patent-leather pumps said, "It's going to cut into infidelity. Definitely. People tell themselves they're just having a drink with a colleague, and they light up a cigarette—everybody knows that's just a metaphor for sex." She went on, "Given that I smoke infrequently, and largely to look cool, smoking in a restaurant makes me think I'm chic and adult, and I have no interest in seeming that way in the privacy of my own home." She became a little emphatic: "It's social intercourse. If you were sitting in a restaurant and you really wanted a cigarette and didn't have any, you might turn to the guy at the table next to you and say, 'Can I bum a cigarette?' Now if you finish your meal you won't turn to the table next to you and say, 'Are you done with that sandwich? Can I finish your sandwich?' " On being asked if she would sneak into a rest room to have a few stolen puffs, she replied, "No. Never. I see no point in smoking unless men are watching."

Some smokers will doubtless avoid New York City entirely, and move to Paris. Because of the infinite pleasure in the illicit, however, some will stay. At Leisure Time, another bowler with a cigarette put it like this: "I'll just go on smokin' anyway. They'll have to call the cops on me."

KNIPL IN LIMBO

SOME people feel that Ben Katchor, with his "Julius Knipl, Real Estate Photographer" strip, has over the past several years been doing for comics what Marcel Proust once did for the novel. Others feel that, to be more precise, he's been doing for New York what Proust once did for Paris. Clearly, the *Village Voice's* new editor, Karen Durbin, belongs to neither of these camps. In fact, hardly had she taken control of the *Voice*, last year, than she let it be known that she was going to jettison the strip—which follows the piddling, two-bit photographer Julius Knipl through his daily wanderings around a kind of perfectly grungy metropolis—as soon as contractually possible, which turned out to be last month.

That sad state of affairs was meanwhile giving David Isay, a producer affiliated with National Public Radio, conniptions. Last year, as part of an NPR piece about Katchor, Isay had produced a sequence of two-minute aural renditions of Katchor's evocatively melancholy strip. And he had so much fun doing so that he resolved to keep on doing it. Scott Simon's producers agreed to provide a weekly slot for future Knipl radio strips on Simon's Saturday-morning broadcast, and the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (Isay's usual patron) signalled its initial enthusiasm.

But now, suddenly, the entire venture seemed in jeopardy. For although the Knipl strip would still be appearing in marginal papers all around the country (even in Iowa!), the loss of its regular outlet in New York, the strip's palpable home, was beginning to make an even more than usually dispirited Katchor consider shutting down the whole enterprise. But then Isay and Katchor hit on an idea: why couldn't the strip continue to appear on a weekly basis, completely unmediated, in various sites around the city itself—say, in the windows of the Gray's Papaya drink stands at Eighth Street and Sixth Avenue and up at Broadway and Seventy-second? Those particular venues appealed to the pair because (a) they seemed entirely in keeping with the ethos of the strip—the sort of tenuous places that Knipl might easily stumble into in the midst of his rounds—and (b) Isay happened to have gone to high school with Gray's daughter.

Katchor set to work fashioning a nifty display box, complete with eight-watt illumination, and Isay got in touch with the Grays. Mr. Gray, his daughter's enthusiasm notwithstanding, didn't warm to the idea. Days passed—"Geez," Katchor comments. "It got to be like auditioning for Leo Castelli!"—and when Gray demurred, Katchor and Isay were thrust back out onto the streets, Knipl-like, with their little scheme.

THEN, one morning, trudging down Second Avenue just south of St. Mark's Place, near Isay's studio, they happened to gaze into the narrow storefront window of the B & H Dairy, the last, scraggly remnant of a once teeming avenueful of kosher eating establishments. The window was plastered with placards proclaiming the day's fare ("2 eggs any style on our own challah bread"). Isay and Katchor looked at each other and wordlessly concurred: Perfect.

Inside, as they wedged themselves onto the stools along the dairy's narrow counter, Katchor realized that it was even more perfect than that: this was the very place where, thirteen years earlier, he first met his wife. The dairy had changed hands in the meantime, but the new manager, Beatrice Poznanski, a fetchingly harried young Polish émigrée, took to the idea without a moment's hesitation.

That was a few weeks ago, and Katchor has been keeping the vitrine well stocked ever since. "Before, the kind of people who inhabit the strip didn't necessarily ever encounter it," he says. "Whereas now, people walking by, out of the corner of their eye they might notice this new thing. What is it? Especially late at night, when, with its soft neon glow, it's sort of like a beacon. People stand there hunched, looking—maybe there's an added thrill to be reading it in such a historic surrounding."

The other day, at lunch, as Ms. Poznanski, this Sylvia Beach of the East Village, was looking on during the weekly changing of the strip, somebody asked her why she'd ever gone along with such a scheme. "Oh, I don't know," she said, smiling. "They seemed like nice gentlemen. And my son is really into comics." What did he make of this one? "All right," she said. "Nothing special."

Outside, a few minutes later, Katchor was obviously still smarting from the comment. "And who is this son, anyway?" he harrumphed. "Some professor of world literature, or what?"

Others, however, have proved more enthusiastic. Gray's arch-competitor, Papaya King—or, actually, the *son* of Papaya King (Papaya Prince?)—glommed on to the idea immediately, and Katchor has installed a new vitrine at the Papaya King stand at Eighty-sixth and Third.

Recently, Katchor received word that he was about to be awarded a Guggenheim for his continuing labors. Isay, on the other hand, learned at about the same time that a suddenly Gingrich-spooked C.P.B. wasn't going to be funding anything as flagrantly unconventional as a Knipl radio series. Undaunted, he and Katchor have decided to go ahead with the project, on a more attenuated basis, while they try to patch together some novel, if inevitably niggling, way of getting the whole thing funded.

QUOTH QUIVERS

ROBIN QUIVERS, the forty-two-year-old co-host of "The Howard Stern Show" and the author of the just published memoir "Quivers," laughs almost continuously, in three different styles: a low rumble, conveying impending dissatisfaction; a cacophonous chuckle, conveying complete dissatisfaction; and an outraged squeal, which can mean anything. When Quivers employs any of her laughs, people notice. A number of fashionable people who took notice of her laughter recently during lunch in a midtown restaurant were overheard to remark, too, on her air of vulnerability, which seemed to go along

GINO'S LONG RUN

THERE is a restaurant on Lexington Avenue near Sixty-first Street called Gino, which has not changed its policies much in a half century—no reservations, no credit cards, no earringed waiters. And yet, as a longtime customer, I have found Gino to be enduringly contemporary, rejuvenating itself constantly with the arrival of young men and women who first came to the restaurant as children and now, in this city of liberal and radical tolerances, become reactionary at dinnertime, preferring old-fashioned Italian family dinners where the management is conservative, the prices are moderate, and some of the veteran waiters still wear clip-on bow ties. Gino's food prices will actually be rolled back to their 1945 level on Friday and Saturday of this week, as the restaurant celebrates its fiftieth anniversary. This means that the $7.25 antipasto will be sixty cents; lamb chops at $23.95 will drop to $2.50; and coffee will be served free with the compliments of Gino himself, whose full name is Gino Circiello, and who, at eighty-three, will step out of retirement for the two-day event.

In 1944, while working as an assistant manager of Caruso's restaurant, on East Fifty-ninth Street, Gino saw a rental sign on the ground floor of a brownstone on Lexington Avenue near Bloomingdale's. He did not see an Italian restaurant nearby, and thought that this street of shoppers was an ideal place for one. The brownstone's upper-floor tenants were thriving as hairdressers and dressmakers, and on the fourth floor was a music teacher who spent her summers in the Catskills, always accompanied by her mini-size piano, which was lowered and raised by ropes outside her window. Gino liked the neighborhood and the neighbors, and, together with two partners, he signed a five-year lease at a monthly cost in rent and taxes of four hundred dollars—a cost that the present proprietors (two of Gino's former waiters and his chef) have seen rise to a current monthly rate of about twenty thousand dollars.

Fittingly, the restaurant's décor and furnishings have changed little through the years. Near its front door is the mahogany bar that Gino bought on the Bowery during the winter of 1945; in the dining area behind the bar are Gino's twenty-seven original tables. Covering most of the sidewalls and the vestibule of the rectangular restaurant is tomato-red wallpaper across which four rows of zebras are shown leaping unharmed through fusillades of flying arrows. One night recently, after a couple of Sambucas, I counted three hundred and fourteen zebras, and I saw for the first time that a single stripe was missing from the rumps of half the animals.

When I mentioned this to Gino, he admitted in a roundabout way that the wallpaper possessed an artistic touch of negligence. He explained that after the restaurant was forced to close briefly in the early nineteen-seventies, owing to a kitchen fire, he had the wallpaper remade by a young designer, and the designer somehow failed to copy a stripe near the tail of the smaller of a pair of zebras that were the prototypes for all the zebras in the pattern. This oversight was repeated throughout, marring the regularity of one zebra in every pair. Before Gino noticed the mistake, however, the rolls of paper had been glued to his restaurant's walls. And, in true Gino tradition, he decided against changing anything. Several years later, when the wallpaper was again replaced, because its colors were faded and its texture was deteriorating, the pattern was repeated in conformity with the past—with a tomato-red background and with half the zebras missing a stripe.

—GAY TALESE

with her unfashionable sartorial sense—black cat suit and green jacket with a faux-pearl lizard pin, and long, crimped hair. "If you're fly, no one can intimidate you," Quivers said, casting a long look at one of the fashionable people—a departing, not similarly coiffed Catherine Deneuve. "That's the whole message of my book."

It has taken Quivers many years to find and comfort her inner child, whose suffering forms the emotional nexus of her book. In "Quivers" we see her growing up in Baltimore, being sexually abused by her father, joining the Air Force and smoking pot, having a nervous breakdown, and loving Howard Stern. "I guess I've destroyed my image as a black Pollyanna," Quivers said, laughing her low-rumble laugh. "But I had so much that was ready to come out. Like Roseanne. Maybe if my parents had known what I would become they would have been nicer to me." When she was growing up, Quivers went on to say, she was chided by other kids her age for just being Quivers. "I had this voice, and people used to make fun of it. They said I sounded white. When I began working with Howard, he taught me that I had to develop a character. So I did. And she's just like me, warm and loving."

During lunch, Quivers laughed approximately a hundred and sixty times. Unlike some other black women on radio and television—Hattie McDaniel in "Beulah," Isabel Sanford in "The Jeffersons," Esther Rolle in "Good Times," for example—Quivers does not project an image of beleaguered crankiness. On the air, she is a model of bemused good sense. Her laughter acts as a kind of musical counterpoint to Stern's frequent diatribes against blacks, homosexuals, women, and the sexually abused, but it rarely dissuades Stern from ranting. Still, Quivers does not consider her laughter a form of encouragement. She laughs because "that's *Howard's* opinion about things," she explained. "Howard is the voice of things people think but don't say. I'm more the moral conscience of the show."

While Quivers ate a bowl of pasta, her publisher, Judith Regan, appeared. Quivers trusts Regan, who also published Stern's memoir and a number of other controversial best-sellers, among them "Beavis and Butt-head: This Book Sucks." Regan now has her own imprint at HarperCollins, and heads what she describes as "a small multimedia empire": she is currently developing television pilots and film scripts. Although Regan has been described as a "pop vulture" and, when crossed, as "Ilsa, the she-bitch of Belsen," she understands how Quivers feels. "There is so much *denial* in this country," Regan said. "Robin has had to deal with so much *hurt.*" She cast a protective glance at Quivers. "We need a TV deal on this one," she said. "I think Robin should lecture."

"But I only get a week off from the show!" Quivers said, chuckling.

Regan brushed this concern aside. "People need you," she said, tucking into a plate of tuna tartare. "Robin, you're the moral compass of the world. How many times do I have to tell you? You could start a whole *anti*-denial movement. I see tapes. And spirituality could be your angle. I think you could star in the TV movie of your life. Right now, it's you and me. I challenge anyone to come up with a bigger deal."

PETER PAUL AND RON

At the opening the other evening of "Peter Paul Rubens—Oil Paintings and Oil Sketches," at the renowned modernist Gagosian Gallery, on Madison Avenue, some of the guests (among them scholars, dealers, museum heads, old-rich buyers, new-rich buyers, entertainment-biz buyers, and shy, "from the private collection of" anonymous buyers) converged in front of "The Four Evangelists," one of sixteen works on view. The guests were sipping champagne, and looking comforted by the Master as they were taken in hand by Rory Howard, the fairly freshly minted (from Eton and the University of Edinburgh), twenty-four-year-old curator of the exhibition. A sort of Hugh Grant look-alike, he was wearing his father's twenty-five-year-old Savile Row pinstripes, he explained, in preference to his grandfather's forty-year-old Savile Row pinstripes. Then, nodding at the painting, he said, "This is the first time in a hundred and fifty years that this baby has been off the walls of Sudeley Castle, in the Cotswolds."

Among the guests standing with him was the renowned modernist rock impresario Ron Delsener (Billy Joel, Elton John, Eric Clapton, Rolling Stones concerts). "And this is the best one," Delsener said, somewhat frenetically.

"Anthony Speelman, my godfather and my role model, lent the pair of portraits over there on the opposite wall," Howard said, with calm authority. "Of Rubens's second wife's sister and her husband. Those two are the jewels of my show. They're so strong. The freshness of his brush. The spontaneity. This Old Master is very alive."

Howard pointed to "The Four Evangelists." "It's a *modello* for a series of tapestries that the Infanta Isabella—for whom Rubens was also a spy, you know—commissioned for a convent in Madrid," he said, knowledgeably and confidently. "And over on the other wall is another beautiful oil sketch, 'Clytie Grieving.' She was in love with Apollo, and she looked into the sun for days and mourned and turned into a sunflower. And over there—"

"This is the best one," Delsener interrupted, indicating the "Evangelists." "Who owns it?"

"Mollie Dent-Brocklehurst," Howard said, and he graciously introduced a very pretty, curly-haired woman of his own age standing nearby. "That is, her family owns it. The family lives in the castle in the Cotswolds. Just ten miles from my house, actually. That is, it's my parents' house. You must come to the Cotswolds. The sleepy little village of Winchcombe is built around Mollie's castle. The castle has been there for a thousand years."

"That's where you can get to see this painting?" Delsener asked.

"It looks better here in the light than it looks in the castle," Dent-Brocklehurst said pleasantly. "It's dark in the castle."

"How much?" Delsener asked.

"It's not for sale," Dent-Brocklehurst said, again pleasantly.

"But you can see it over there on the Sudeley Castle tour," Howard said. "For only eight dollars per head." ◆

This week's contributors: Lillian Ross, Alison Rose, Lawrence Weschler, Hilton Als, Lillian Ross.

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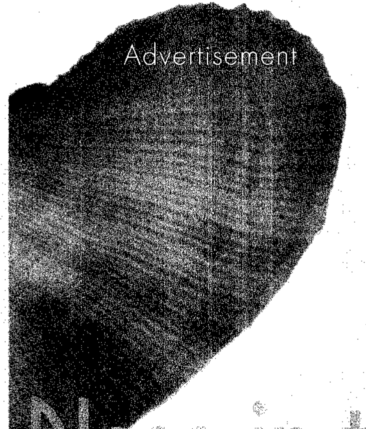

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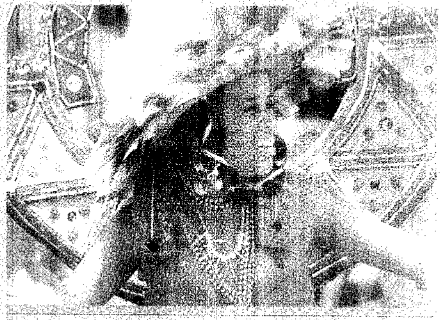

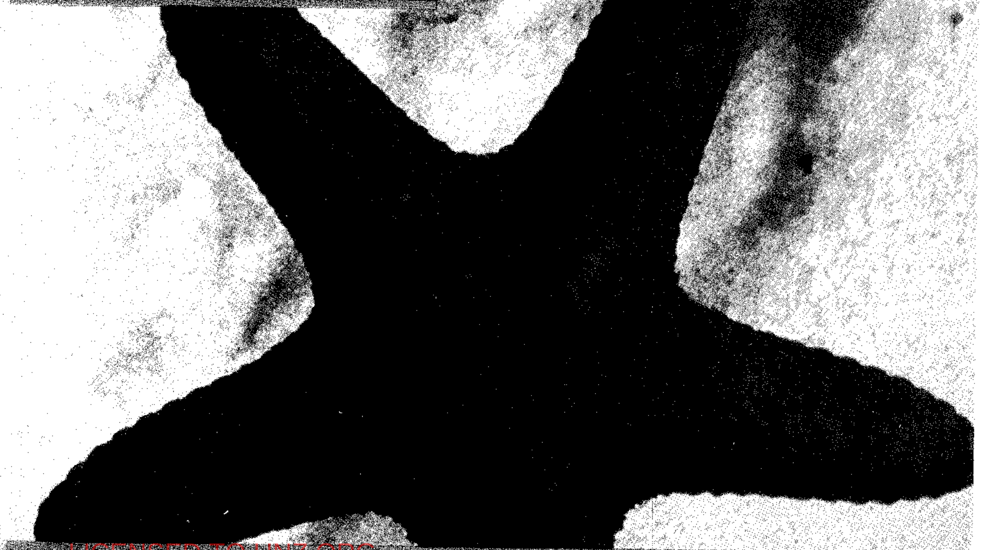

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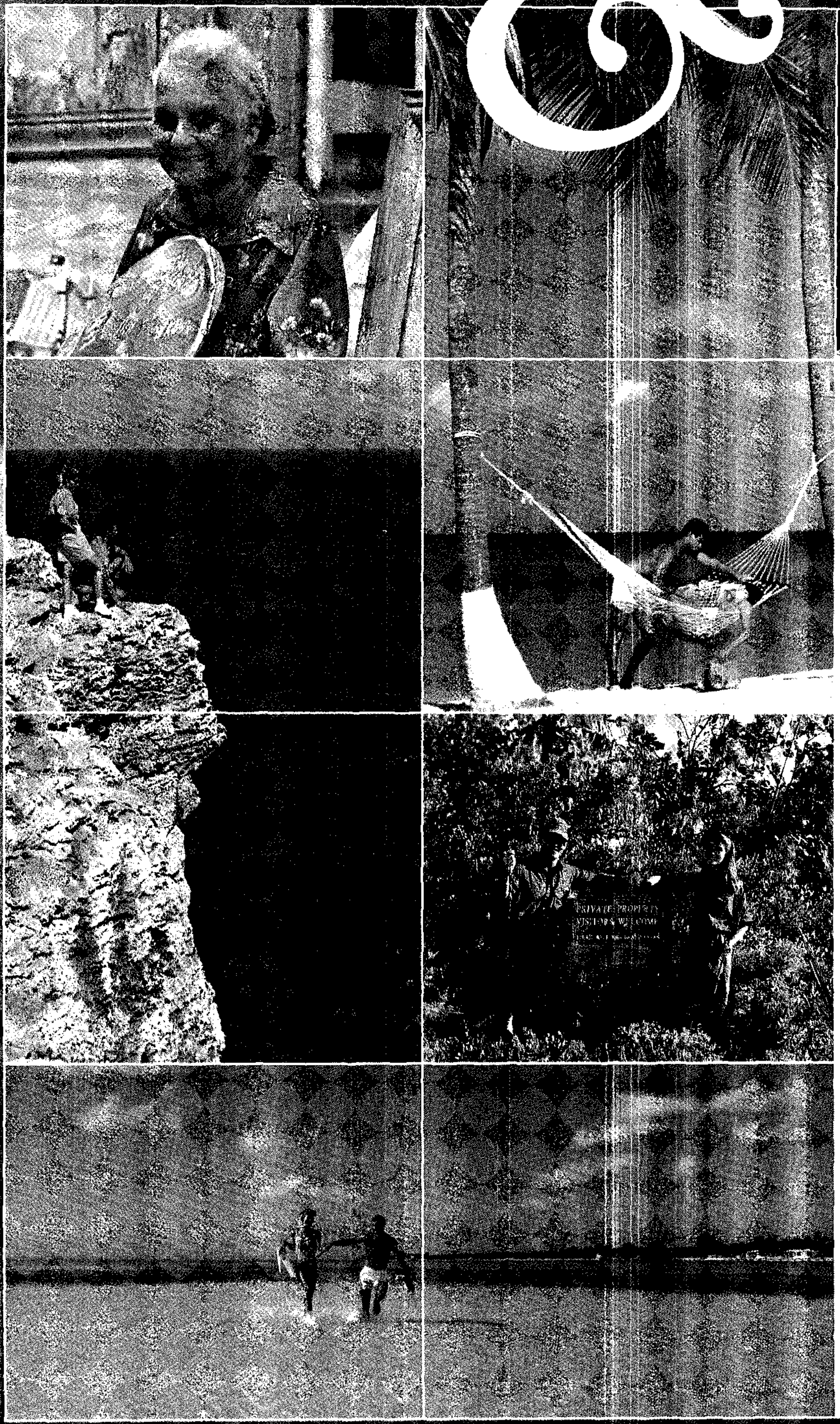

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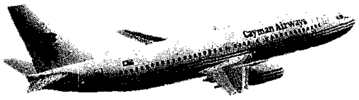

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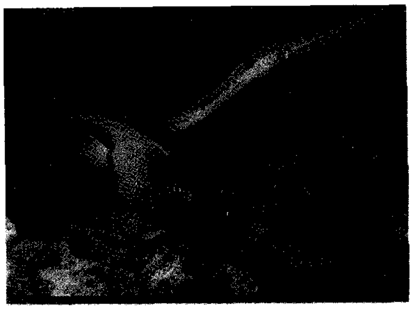
Ultimate Underwater Spots

Beneath the Caribbean's sparkling surface is an underwater universe inhabited by plant and marine life just waiting to be discovered. With an average water temperature of about 80 degrees Fahrenheit, the Caribbean is an ideal destination for those who want to spend most of their time in the water.

The waters surrounding Bonaire (an island that caps an underwater volcanic mountain) have been a protected marine park for nearly twenty years, making it a perfect dive site. Here one can see an array of coral and a bounteous range of colorful fish that live around it. A similarly refreshing palette awaits divers off the Turks and Caicos, which have a spectacular system of reefs and caves and a veritable circus of fish, sea sponges, and coral.

In the Cayman Islands, snorkelers can slip into sunny, shallow waters, paddle a few yards, and suddenly discover the depths: walls of coral dropping hundreds of feet. The Caymans' 200-plus dive sites range from the twelve-foot-deep Stingray City where placid moments are shared with giant rays as cuddly as puppies to the thrilling drama of the 1,200-foot plunge of Bloody Bay Wall.



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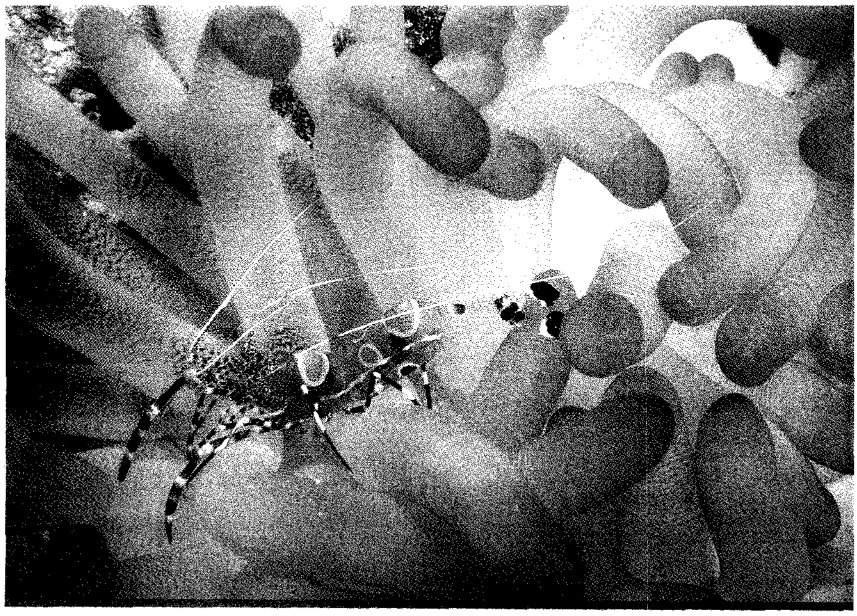
Anguilla's ocean beaches are the biggest draw. Their warm sands serve as a launch pad for the watersports popular on the island—snorkeling, deep-sea fishing, and wind-surfing. On Aruba, visibility in the calm blue-green waters that lap the shores is as deep as 100 feet—perfect for snorkelers.

Best Bets

- With good reason, the Cayman Islands are the most popular diving destination of all. Grand Cayman's North Sound is home to Stingray City.
- The U.S. Virgin Islands have two sign-posted underwater parks for snorkelers: Buck Island Reef National Monument, in St. Croix, and Trunk Bay, in St. John.
- A good place to learn to scuba dive is at the Underwater Explorers Society at Port Lucaya in the Bahamas. After just three hours of instruction, a beginner can start diving.



In the Caribbean and the Bahamas, snorkelers and scuba divers can discover a new world; this one is underwater and exploding with color.

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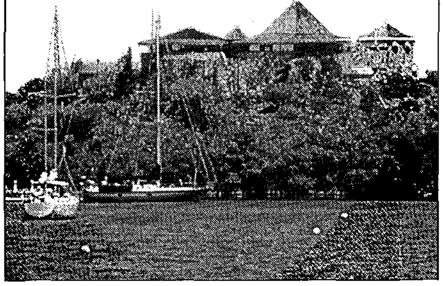

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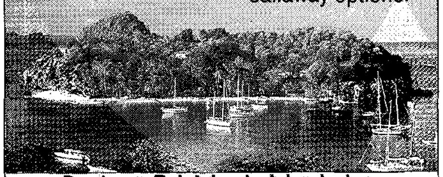

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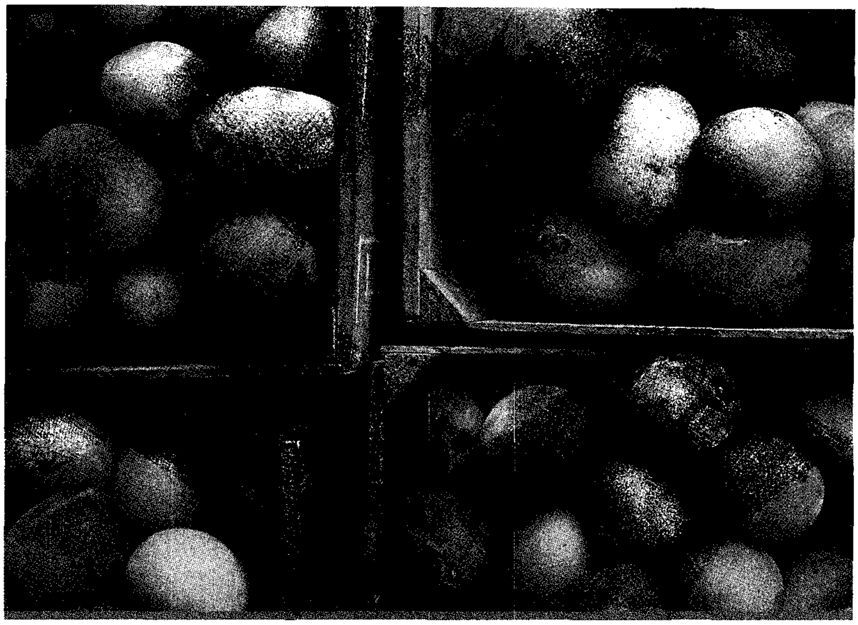

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The Flavor of the Islands

The Caribbean's mix of cultures is evident in its cuisine. The culinary traditions of France, Spain, Africa, England, the Netherlands, India, and China are all a part of island cooking, with each island providing its own flair.

The palate-teasing scents of Puerto Rico's cuisine—infused with Spanish, Creole, Caribbean, and Continental influences—are an aromatic manifestation of Puerto Rico's cultural richness. There's the full-flavored *asapao*, a chicken-, lobster-, or shrimp-and-rice gumbo; the sweetness of *flan*, the custard dessert; and the savory tang of conch fritters.

The vividness of life on islands drenched by the sun shows up in the homegrown flavors of islands like St. Vincent, the volcanic island that heads up the Grenadines, and Dominica and Grenada, where agriculture, not tourism, is the economic mainstay. Grenada boasts of growing forty-five different kinds of mangoes, thirty-seven types of pears and spices of all kinds, including the nutmeg that is the defining ingredient of its excellent rum punch.

Dominica's rain forest, with its many waterfalls, has lush growths of bananas and coconuts. The bounty of the plantations of St. Vincent show up in the piles of tomatoes, mangoes, and papaya that fill the island's markets.

Island spices are the sharpest in places like Trinidad and Tobago, where West Indians, Chinese, Africans, Lebanese, and Europeans have introduced their own flavors into the local mix.

In St. Barts, Guadeloupe, Martinique, and St. Martin, the cuisine is distinctly (and most pleasurably) French. Yet, at the same time, African and island influences are unmistakable in Creole dining and Caribbean smiles.

Sampling the Fare

- An island that has many fine restaurants is Martinique, which has the enviable combination of access to French markets (French bread is brought in from Paris), the island's own fresh produce and seafood, and a populace that enjoys good food.
- Salt cod was a staple for early Caribbean settlers and it remains a mainstay of island cuisine today. On St. Lucia, street vendors peddle crispy salt cod fritters that are irresistible.
- Every island in the Caribbean has its own beer, but Curaçao makes one with its own special twist. It produces Heineken using Curaçao desalinated sea water, making a brew of unmatched purity.

Caribbean cuisine, which is a blend of cultures, provides visitors with a taste of island life.

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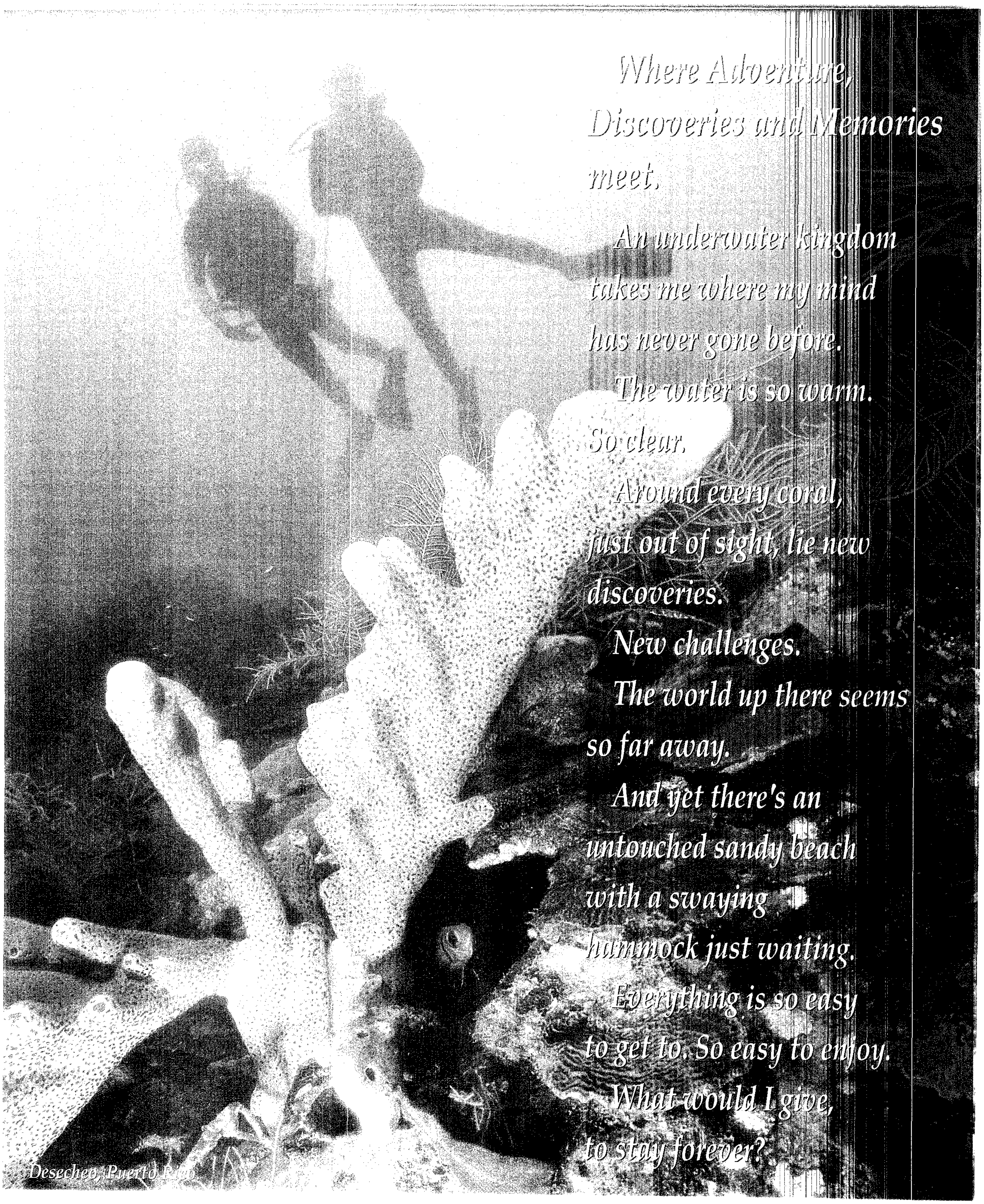

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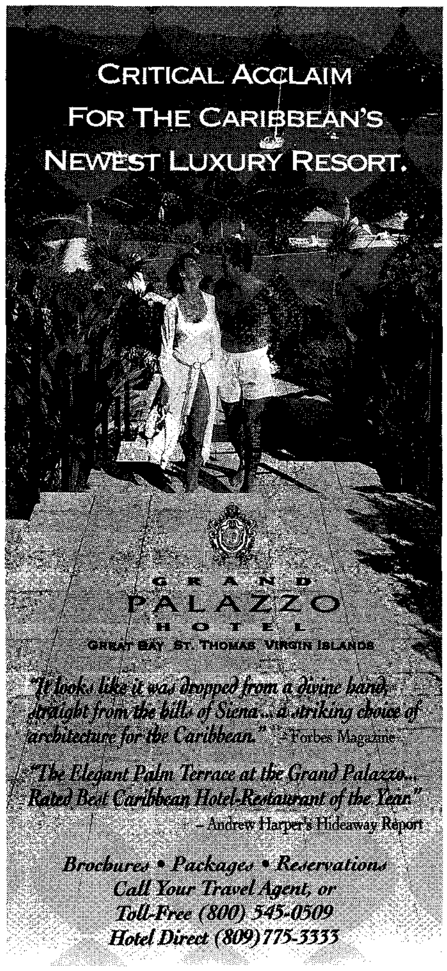

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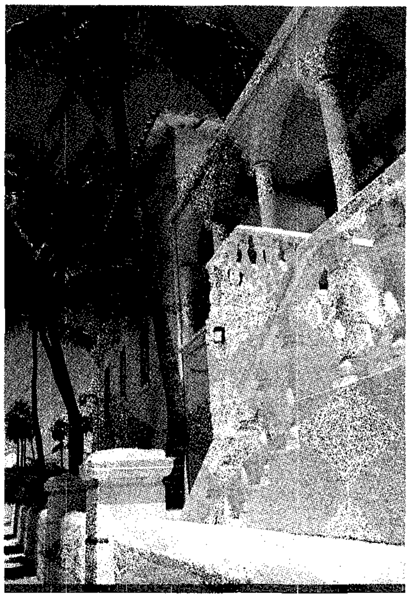
Scenic Beauties

The views of the U.S. Virgin Islands are a visual feast. These islands offer some of the world's most perfect beaches. They also offer a panorama of nearly fifty islands—some big, some little more than rocks jutting up above the sea. Each island has its own special loveliness. St. Croix has the polish of Christiansted, the one-time capital of the Danish West Indies, as well as the environmental treasures of Buck Island Reef National Monument. Fundamental to St. John's beauty is the tranquillity of its nature preserve, which covers nearly two-thirds of the island. St. Thomas has both the bright lights of the "big" city, the busy port of Charlotte Amalie, as well as mountaintop vantage points for indulging in leisurely views of Caribbean sunsets.

The red-orange tiled roofs of Dutch townhouses in Willemstad color Curaçao bright. Here, the Amsterdam-style *Handel-skade*, as the capital city's houses are known, range from vivid red, blue, yellow and purple to softer pastels. Outside the towns, Curaçao's small, white sand beaches and romantic, secluded coves, framed by giant cliffs or exotic flora and fauna, capture the sun in a way possible only in a place that gets less than twenty inches of rain a year.



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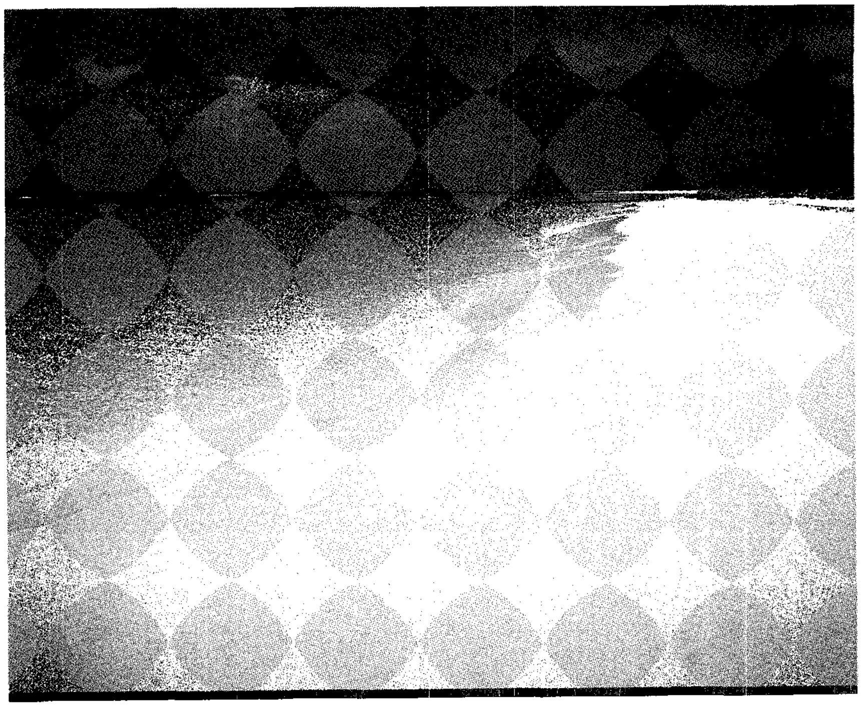
Sure Sightings

- For a glimpse of typical island beauty, visit the Black Rocks on St. Kitts. When the surf crashes against the volcanic rock, ocean spray and solidified lava produce a rainbow of colors.
- Visitors' best chance of catching the fabled "green flash," the fleeting combination of yellow sun and blue sea at sunset, is probably at Rick's Cafe on the southern end of Negril, the famous stretch of Jamaican beach.

From architecture to beaches, the islands of the Caribbean and the Bahamas offer incredibly beautiful sites, guaranteeing that just about anywhere you'll find "a room with a view."



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Accept no substitutes.

Down in the Caribbean, all islands are *not* the same. To get the island vacation you've always dreamed about (palm trees swaying over white sugarsand beaches, luxurious resorts hidden in greenery) choose the United States Virgin Islands. *This* is as beautiful as it gets. And being part of the U.S. means no inoculations or passports or visas (but bring proof of citizenship). World-class dining and world-class shopping, too! See your travel agent.

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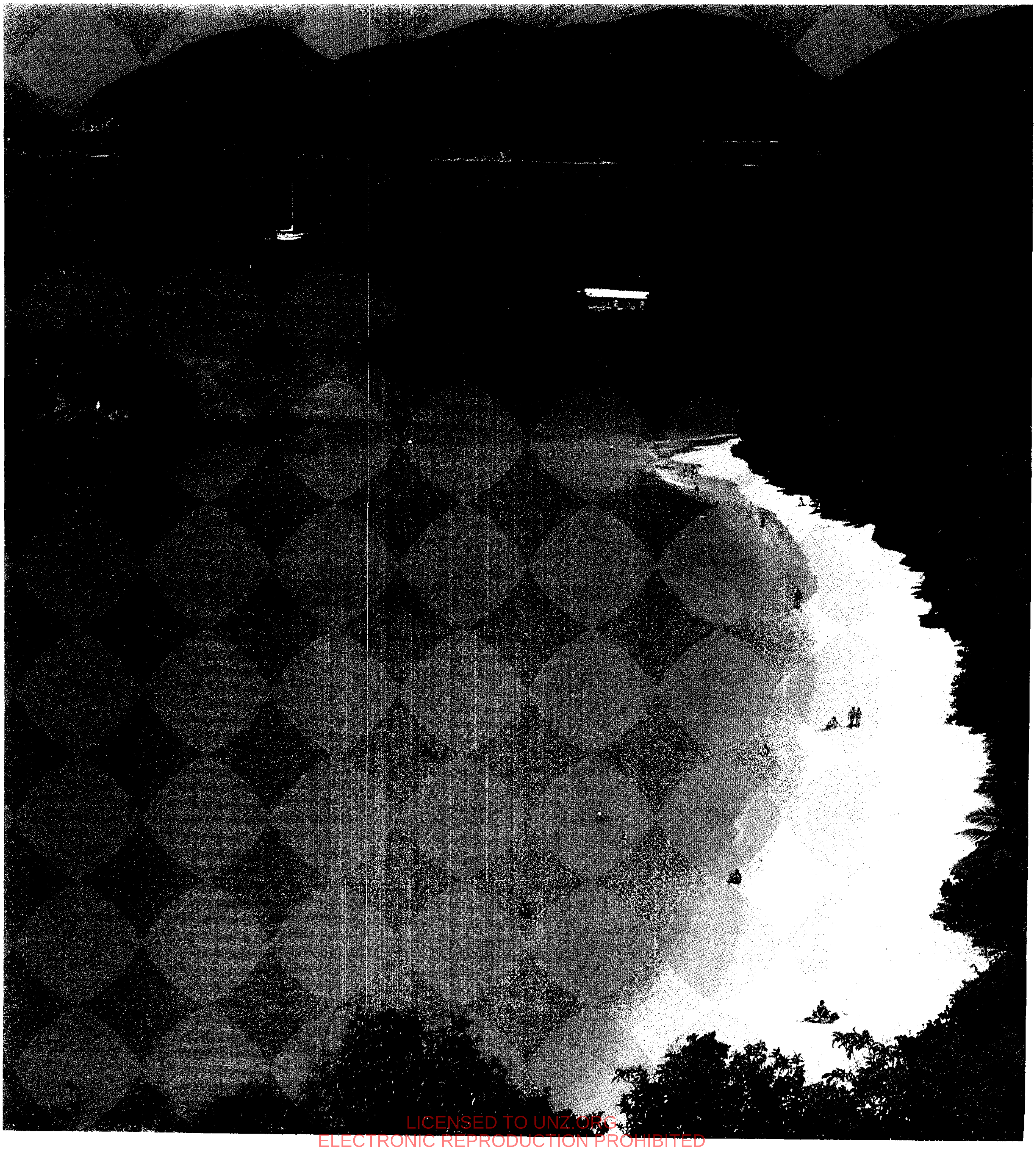

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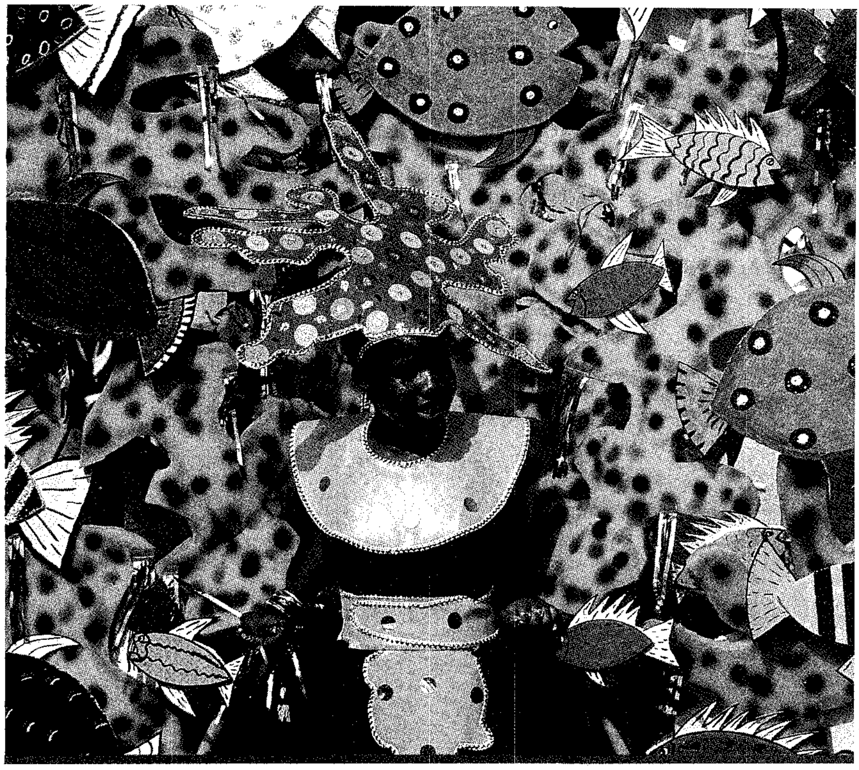

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Tropical Rhythms

The Caribbean is one of the best places to visit if music is what you're interested in. After all, the Caribbean is home to many types of music including salsa, jazz, and calypso.

In an island paradise like Barbados, where one perfect day follows another, music marks the changing seasons. In January, it's the Barbados Jazz Festival. Easter, it's opera. June through August, there's the summerlong Crop Over Festival.

Visitors hear all these sounds—and plenty more—year-round. There's classical island music—the indigenous West Indian steelpan, made of oil drums whose pitch varies with their depth. On Barbados, the drums' catchy, upbeat tempo combines with saucy, spicy lyrics to capture the good humor of the warm and friendly Barbadians.

Reggae has swept the world, but Jamaica remains its home. Whether it's heard in a luxurious hotel bar, on a disco dance floor, or on the beach around a driftwood fire, reggae is the pulse of life in Jamaica. The sounds of reggae harmonize with the waterfalls of lush Ocho Rios, an area that has moved visitors with its beauty since the days of Christopher Columbus. And reggae echoes on the streets of cosmopolitan Kingston, the largest English-speaking city in the western hemisphere south of Miami.

Noteworthy Music Festivals

- Fourth Annual Jazz Festival, St. Lucia, May 11-14.
- Jazz and Latin Music Festival, Aruba, late June.
- Salsa Festival, Curaçao, early August.
- Reggae Sunsplash International Music Festival, Jamaica, early August.

Most islands in the Caribbean celebrate Carnival. The great music at these festivals provides a lively setting to the bright costumes.

© Doug Armand

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Celebrating the Past

The Caribbean's history is vast—and varied. Many peoples, from the original native Americans to the British, French, Dutch, Danes, and Swedes, have left their mark on the area.

But there are more than symbols of the old countries. There's the colonial flavor found on the sister islands of St. Kitts and Nevis as well as on nearby Antigua and Barbuda, where Admiral Lord Horatio Nelson began his career as Captain Nelson.

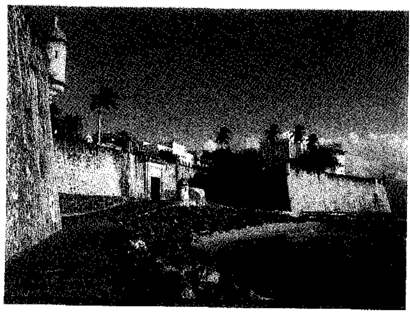
British influence shows in massive fortifications such as St. Kitt's Brimstone Hill, a fort known as the Gibraltar of the West Indies, in the stone walls and barracks that still encircle English Harbor in Antigua and in the legends of Nelson's amorous exploits.

The Bahamas set a royal tone for tourism when the Duke of Windsor settled there with the woman he loved after giving up his King's crown for her. The Windsor elan still shows in the Riviera-style *nightlife* of Nassau and Freeport. Today, that sophistication extends throughout the Bahamas, which also offer the secluded beauty of white—and a few pink—sand beaches.

Reliving History

- There are self-guided walking tours of the beautifully restored historic districts of St. Croix. Downtown Christiansted, with its colorful, yellow Danish buildings, is on the National Historic Register. More Victorian is Frederiksted, with its pastel-colored gingerbread homes.
- St. Kitts calls itself the Mother of the Caribbean because it was the first British colony. Both St. Kitts and Nevis are packed with history. Most hotels and inns were originally old plantation homes. The partially restored Bath Hotel—the Caribbean's first—sits beside the hot spring that gave its name to Nevis.

The historic Gate of San Juan, in Puerto Rico.



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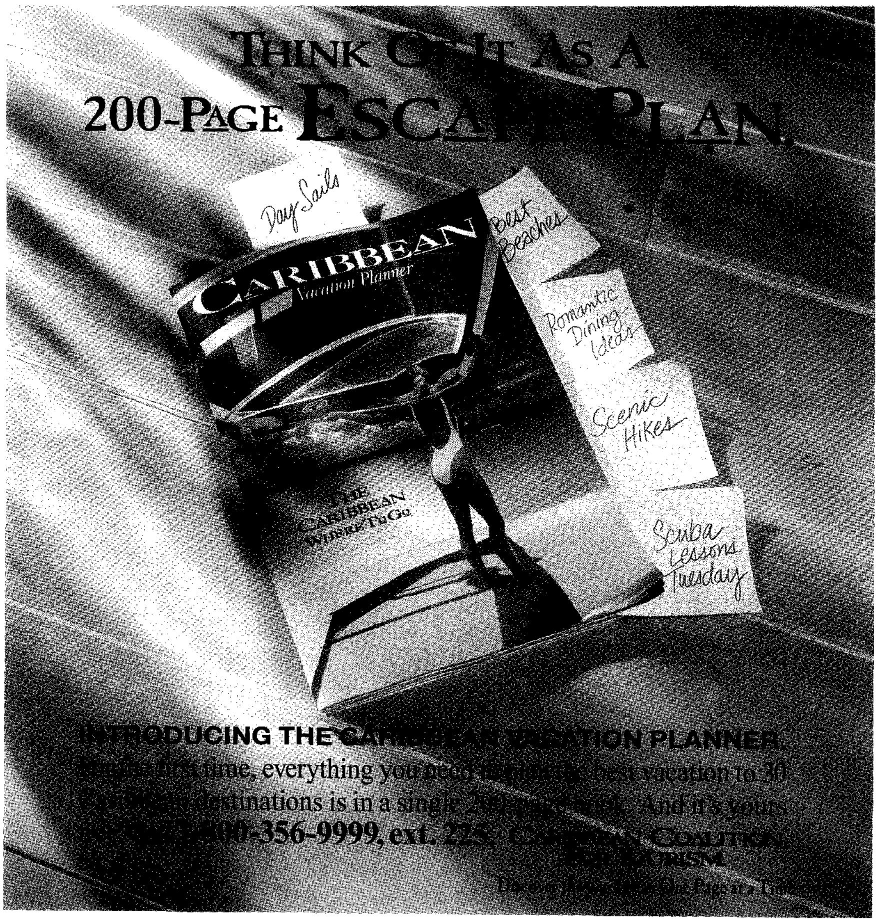

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Adventure Islands

Despite centuries of European colonization and trading throughout the Caribbean, some places there remain so untouched that adventure travelers hike through tracts of wilderness little changed from what was seen by early explorers. Belize, on the east coast of Central America, is beautifully primitive, characterized by deserted beaches and thatched-roof, ocean-front cottages. Its primordial rain forest and mountains are habitats for jaguar, monkeys, thousands of flowers and hundreds of birds and butterflies.

The looming drama of Caribbean scenery—the dramatic way Mount Scenery juts 3,000 feet up on the island of Saba, the glimpse of an extinct volcano called the Quill on St. Eustatius, the twin peaks of St. Lucia—can make the heart jump in more ways than one.

These ecotourism destinations deliver thigh-burning workouts. The ascent up the Quill, and into the rain forest at its ancient rim, ends in the clouds. The hike up Mount Scenery, the highest point of an island so mountainous that the only flat piece of land is its airport's runway, traverses two types of rain forest.

St. Lucia's Pitons are nearly half a mile high, and they mark the entry to 19,000 acres of primeval preserve with exotic wildlife, giant ferns, and wild orchids.

© Larry Ulrich

Unspoiled Delights

- Ecotourism is of growing importance throughout the Caribbean, but it is the mainstay of tourism in Dominica. This volcanic island offers strenuous full-day hikes such as the seven-hour hike (round trip) to the Boiling Lake, the largest such lake in the world. Volcanic vapors keep its waters bubbling.
- A brief ride off Puerto Rico's west coast is El Mona Island, the "Galapagos of the Americas." Giant iguanas, endangered sea turtles, and a variety of birds live on this completely uninhabited and unspoiled island. A local tour company operates camping trips to El Mona; permits are required. ☼

Adventure in the Caribbean and the Bahamas means many things. But one thing is for sure: the islands are a thrill for visitors.

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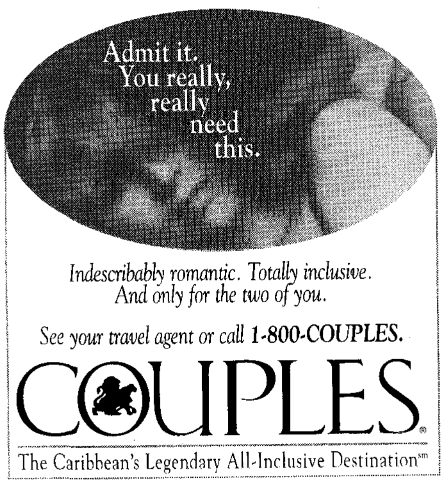
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Caribbean Tourism Office	(212) 682-0435
Cayman Islands Department of Tourism	(212) 682-5582
Curaçao Tourist Board	(212) 683-7660
Consulate of Dominica	(212) 599-8478
French West Indies Tourist Board	(212) 838-7800
Grenada Board of Tourism	(800) 927-9554
Jamaica Tourist Board	(212) 856-9727
Montserrat Tourist Information	(800) 427-0099
Puerto Rico Tourism Company	(800) 223-6530
Saba and St. Eustatius Tourist Information Office	011-599-462231
St. Kitts and Nevis Department of Tourism	(800) 582-6208
St. Lucia Tourist Board	(800) 456-3984
St. Vincent and the Grenadines	(800) 729-1726
Trinidad and Tobago Tourism Authority	(212) 719-0540
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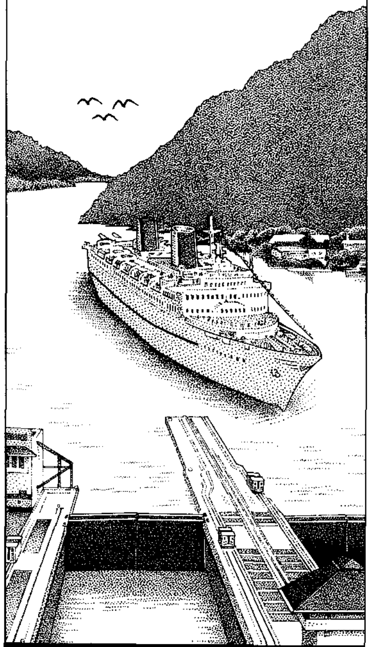

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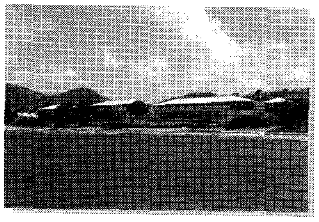

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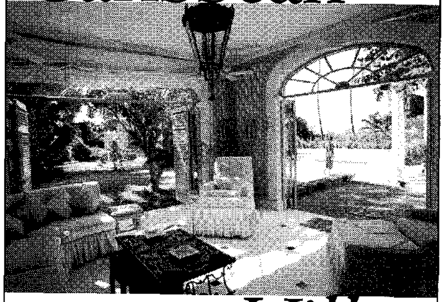

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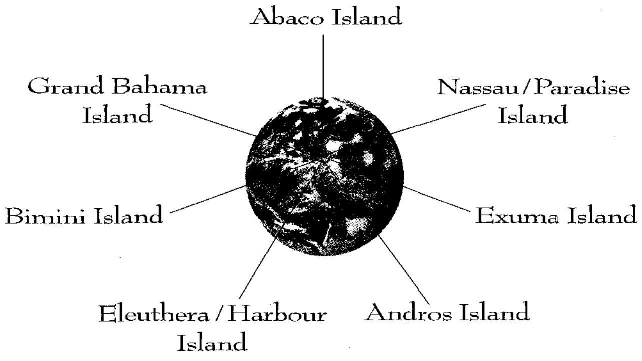
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IN YOUR FACE

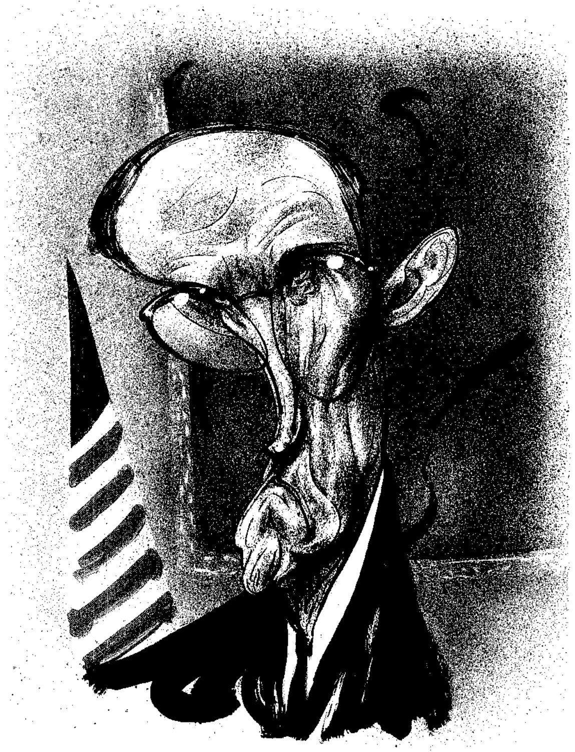
Is it possible to be too tough for New York? Mayor Giuliani's battles are reminiscent of his prosecutorial crusades—and that may be a problem.

BY JAMES TRAUB

IN mid-February, New York's Mayor Rudolph Giuliani presented his draft budget for the coming fiscal year, in the ornate Public Hearing Chamber in City Hall. His deputy mayors and chief aides, seated onstage, flanked him like a Greek chorus—a solemn formation suitable to a grim moment in New York City history. In order to cover a projected deficit of two billion seven hundred million dollars, the Mayor explained, he was proposing deep cuts in welfare and Medicaid payments and in city services, and asking for major concessions from city employees. "The city really has no other choice," the Mayor said, speaking with the slightly foamy background hiss he always produces. "Some of you may wish that we had other choices, some of you by virtue of political ideology, sympathy—whatever—might like to have other choices. There are areas where *I* would like to have other choices." The Mayor didn't enumerate those areas. In fact, he seemed to relish curbing the city's appetite for spending. The night before, when he detailed his plans in a televised address, he had concluded the litany of pain and suffering by saying, "Thank you for listening, and happy Valentine's Day." It put one in mind of the battering ram that the L.A.P.D. repeatedly uses in "Dragnet": the business end of the barrel says "Have a Nice Day."

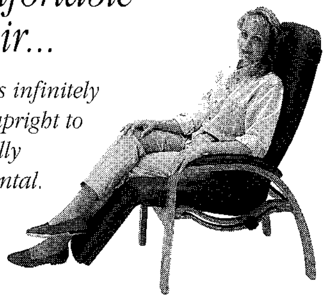
There were in fact a few choices the administration could have made to limit the impact of the cuts on the poor, and several reporters mentioned them in questions at a press conference after the Mayor's speech. But Giuliani, gazing down behind the oversized glasses that dwarf his narrow face, reiterated that, come what might, the city had a deficit to face up to, and since increased taxes were out of the question, he said, the only issue was where the burden of the cuts would fall. A questioner asked if he was concerned that the "political reality" of the cuts for a mayor seeking reëlection might be "severe." Giuliani fixed him with his patented look of sardonic disbelief and said, "I'm *cowered* by it."

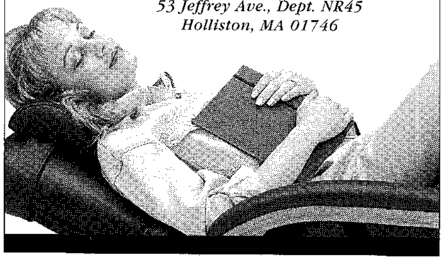
New York City has a battering ram for a mayor. And that, it turns out, is exactly what many of its citizens have been waiting for. New Yorkers, exhausted and disillusioned by the status quo, have cheered the Mayor on as he has assaulted the unions, school administrators, the social-service apparatus, Legal



Other politicians merely connive at the air of resolute principle that the Mayor comes by naturally.

STEVE BRODNER





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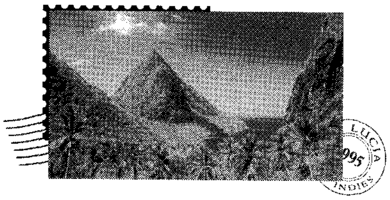

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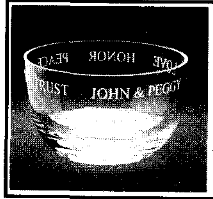

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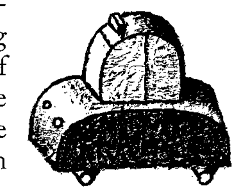
Aid lawyers. Big-city liberalism was virtually a New York City invention; and the popularity of Giuliani's subtractive and often harsh agenda is a vivid sign of the decline of the old order. Many of the traditional battle lines of race, class, and ideology are eroding, or at least shifting. Giuliani has found support in very unlikely places. Some of the city's liberals have found themselves enjoying the mayoral bludgeoning. Mitchell Moss, the director of the Taub Urban Research Center at New York University, supported the incumbent mayor, David Dinkins, in the 1993 mayoralty race and, at the time, compared Giuliani to Attila the Hun. Now he *likes* the fact that Giuliani plays the Hun. "Giuliani has both the temperament and the lack of personal linkages"—to the traditional Democratic constituencies—"to be the guy who puts the city government on a different plane," he says. "He may be mean-spirited. Does that help him get the job done? I think yes."

Giuliani could well be the man for his moment, as his hero, Fiorello LaGuardia, was for his very different moment. And yet it seems increasingly unlikely that he will be seen as one of the city's historic figures. The fiscal crisis that New York finds itself in demands more than mean-spiritedness. The moment requires a sense of shared sacrifice and shared purpose, while the Mayor often seems stuck in his negative agenda. Perhaps he simply enjoys the sound of toppling masonry. He has gone out of his way to mock and abuse those he deems his foes, like Schools Chancellor Ramon Cortines, and has treated neutral parties, like the city's fiscal monitors, as if they were a Fifth Column. Machiavelli warned princes to commit cruelties only when necessary, and Giuliani's cruelties have at times seemed gratuitous—not only unpleasant but imprudent. In the days before his all-important budget presentation, he ordered his commissioners to conduct a purge of employees from prior administrations—a command that spread equal measures of fear and outrage throughout the city government. The Mayor thus managed to divert attention from the urgent issues at hand, unsettle his friends, and swell the ranks of critics who believe that he is, at bottom, an authoritarian personality.



Justice Oliver Wendell Holmes once famously said of Franklin D. Roosevelt, the Mayor's other great hero, that he had a second-class intellect but a first-class temperament. The question raised by Giuliani's first year in office is whether the opposite should be said of him.

THE Mayor often puts one in mind of a figure in an early Renaissance painting—St. Rudy of the Church Militant. He has a trecento look that comes from his matte skin, his long jaw, his hatchet profile, his high, square forehead, and his deep-set eyes. His mother, Helen, who is eighty-five, recently said that Brother Joseph, his adviser at Manhattan College, "thought my son was too ingrown," and that she herself had feared that he was "too much for the Catholic schools and the Catholic Church." Giuliani never trained for the priesthood, as he had originally planned, but the legal career he chose instead gave practical form to his moral passion. He has very little of that sense of underlying detachment, of dispassion, one finds in lawyers who take up the cause of whichever client comes along—and, for that matter, in politicians who have grown wise and weary from the ceaseless play of divergent interests.

Giuliani is not actually humorless, but he tends to deploy his wit as a weapon. When I met Giuliani at a party, I made a joking reference to the fact that I had been following him. "Oh, yes," he said with a look of mock recognition. "Some of my police wanted to shoot you, but I told them to hold off." A few weeks later, I heard him speak at a luncheon where he was presented with a pair of red Everlast boxing gloves. He looked over the crowd toward one of the peskier reporters and said, "Rafael, now I'm ready for that press conference."

The Mayor's relentless drawing of lines is an odd characteristic for a big-city politician, or any politician, but Giuliani, his friends say, is not a politician. He eschews to a really remarkable degree the ordinary arts of politics—horse-trading, back-slapping, trial-ballooning, and whatnot. In his first campaign for the mayoralty, in 1989, Giuliani initially refused to engage in fund-raising; he even refused to wear makeup. Refusal on principle is a Giuliani leitmotif. Throughout his first year in office, he refused to make even the tiniest gesture of deference to City Council Speaker Peter Vallone, thus precipitating battles that might have been avoided at almost no cost.

Other politicians merely connive at the air of resolute principle that the Mayor comes by naturally; this surely accounts for a good deal of his appeal. But there is also an element of narrowness, or even naïveté, to the Mayor's uncompromising stance. He is a man with no coherent set of political principles and no classically partisan position; whatever labels attach themselves to him peel off in short order. Giuliani was, in fact, completely innocent of politics until quite recently. John Gross, a close friend for twenty-five years and the treasurer of his 1993 campaign, says, "We never talked about politics—and I had an interest in politics." One reason that Giuliani may have trouble accepting the idea of legitimate difference of opinion is that he's not habituated to political debate, in which differing ideas can have an equal claim to truth. He appears to think that honest men divine the merits, and others simply clamor after their own interest. The Mayor thus manages to be absolutist in pursuit of pragmatic convictions.

Giuliani's moral certitude helps explain his extraordinary tenure as United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, which lasted from 1983 to 1988. He was an immensely gifted lawyer, with a keen sense of strategy, a bottomless appetite for work, and a consuming desire for victory. For the talented young lawyers whom Giuliani hired, his office felt something like the Kennedy White House, with its combination of bravado and high purpose, its disdain for nicety and bureaucratic process. If you were willing to frame a bold indictment, develop a novel theory, you could be a star. And Giuliani led by example. "He was ferociously aggressive on turf issues," a former assistant says. Poaching cases from the courtly Manhattan District Attorney, Robert Morgenthau, amounted to an in-house sport.

Giuliani's office took it to the bad guys as no one had since Tom Dewey.

In his first few years, the office pursued, and won, important cases against Mafia families; later he won convictions of major Wall Street figures, including Ivan Boesky, and politicians, including Stanley Friedman and Mario Biaggi. It felt at times as if Giuliani were indicting the age, as if he were pursuing not just criminals but evil itself. He even authorized one of his assistants to tell a jury that Attorney General Edwin Meese, President Reagan's great friend and Giuliani's own boss, was "a sleaze," because of his involvement with the corrupt Wedtech company. The whole idea that state power could be turned against the wealthy and the powerful was enthralling to people who had never felt much fondness for prosecutors, and produced a startling shift in the ideological force field that surrounded the office. For a time, Giuliani was the darling of the *Village Voice*. In "City for Sale," Wayne Barrett and Jack Newfield, current and former reporters, respectively, for the *Voice*, described Giuliani as a "priestly prosecutor," a dauntless figure whose father had begun sparring with him from the age of two, teaching him never to duck a fight.

It was an intoxicating moment. "The office as a whole felt that we were on a mission from God," one former assistant says. Crusaders, of course, are not inclined to scruple about fine moral distinctions, or even to admit the existence of a zone of moral neutrality. The old sense of deference toward the defense bar, many of whose members were former assistants themselves, eroded. "Defense attorneys were treated like scum," says one of their number. "The attitude was 'You guys are evil.' " Defendants could be used as bit players in an ongoing passion play, as when a Wall Street figure was dragged across his firm's trading floor in handcuffs; all charges against him and another trader were dropped two years later, by which time their careers had been wrecked. No one apologized, though Giuliani recently admitted that the case had been hastily prepared. These men, apparently, were incidental victims of the office's boldness. Did the end justify the means? It was a question that seemed not to interest either the United States Attorney or any of the people around him.

In its first few years, Giuliani's office, for all the theatrics, was governed largely by the delicate balance between caution and commitment which prevents federal prosecutors from abusing their immense powers. In Giuliani's last few years—the period after he decided to run for mayor—the office brought a remarkable number of high-profile cases that either failed to result in convictions, as in the trials of Bess Myerson and Imelda Marcos, or were overturned on appeal, as in the prosecutions of the G.A.F. and Princeton/Newport companies, and of the securities trader James Mulheren and the Wedtech consultant E. Robert Wallach. It may very well be, as some former assistants argue, that the judiciary was now extracting its revenge—an unwarranted act of pique, but also a powerful proof of the dangers of unbridled insouciance. A less charitable interpretation is that some combination of ambition and missionary zeal, and the lack of internal checks against them, had finally tipped the balance of caution. "What you see there," one former assistant says, "is that he was unquestionably pushing the envelope, unquestionably coming to believe his own myth—that he was invincible, that he was morally correct about everything. This is the thing about Rudy that made me wonder what he would be like as mayor."

THE 1993 mayoral campaign was a bruising affair. Though by that time Giuliani had learned to speak well on a wide variety of issues, his stock-in-trade was the appeal to frustration and fear—directed at aggressive panhandlers, squeegee operators, brazen drug dealers. The Dinkins campaign, with very little positive record to run on, often cast the election in starkly racial terms. A group consisting of black congressmen, clergy, and activists warned of "fascistic elements" behind Giuliani. And President Clinton delivered his famous admonition to wavering New York liberals: "Too many of us are still too unwilling to vote for people who are different than we are." That was absurd; it was Dinkins who was promoting the politics of identity. In the end, Giuliani did win seventy-seven per cent of the white vote and only five per cent of the black vote. But he also made inroads among Hispanic voters and white liberals, many of whom were disenchanted with Dinkins' ceremonial and irresolute style. What President Clinton didn't recognize was

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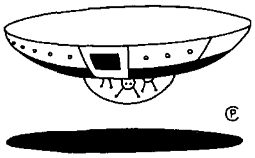
that Dinkins, like George Bush, had come to symbolize an exhausted status quo—the *Daily News* columnist Jim Sleeper labelled him "a Social Democratic hack"—while Giuliani, like Clinton, aroused in many voters a simple hope for change.

The craving for decisive action allowed Giuliani to act in a way that at another time might have been condemned as harsh or peremptory. As soon as he took office, he instructed his new police commissioner, William Bratton, to arrest squeegee men and overaggressive panhandlers. The civil-liberties community objected, but most New Yorkers seemed delighted. The blunt, ebullient police commissioner became the first star of the young administration. A new mood was abroad; the definitive proof came later in the year when Giuliani announced that he would evict the thousand or so unlicensed venders who worked the sidewalks of 125th Street, clogging the street and driving customers from legitimate businesses. Two years earlier, Mayor Dinkins had tried to move the venders but had backed down in the face of furious protests. In mid-October, however, Chief Bratton dispatched hundreds of police officers, in vans and tow trucks and on horseback, to 125th Street to disperse the venders. The inevitable demonstrations came; Al Sharpton courted arrest. And then—nothing. The hubbub died down, and the venders moved to the vacant lot that the city had prepared for them.



Virginia Fields, the City Councilwoman for central Harlem, says that, though she "regretted that so much police force was deemed to be necessary," she considers the forced evacuation a success. Her only real criticism of the Mayor is that he hasn't staged *more* quality-of-life initiatives in Harlem. And the Reverend Calvin Butts, of the Abyssinian Baptist Church in Harlem, who is an important spokesman for black grievances, admits that "rank-and-file Harlemites were not upset that the venders were forced to move." Butts wishes that Giuliani had consulted with him, as Dinkins did, and yet it was precisely because Giuliani lacked those "personal linkages," in Mitchell Moss's term, that he was able to act freely.

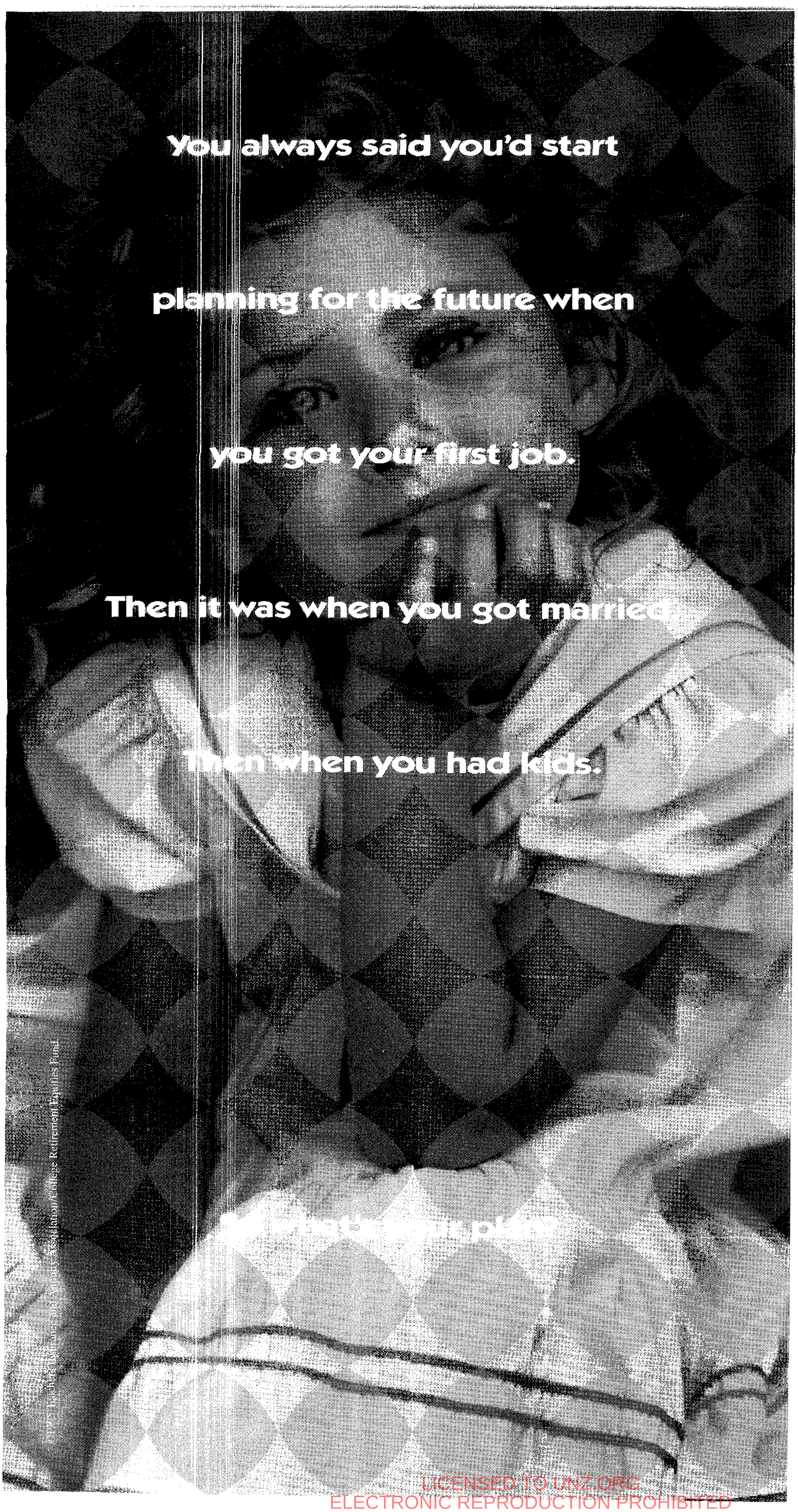
The city was changing in ways that made the moment propitious for a man like Giuliani, and not only on such issues as civil liberties and the quality of life. In 1991, Mayor Dinkins had convened a summit conference on the impending budget crisis, but he hadn't managed to persuade the city's labor and business leaders that they had to act to stave off disaster. The Municipal Assistance Corporation, which had put together the funding that saved the city from bankruptcy in the mid-seventies, offered two hundred million dollars to finance a new rescue package, but the Dinkins administration, despite its strong ties to organized labor, had been unable to secure concessions from the unions. By the time Giuliani took office, the deficit had reached two billion three hundred million dollars, and the unions understood that they could not avoid sacrifices. The new administration agreed to use the MAC money for a "severance package" that would reduce the city's workforce by fifteen thousand. And Giuliani coupled the offer with a threat: the unions could accept the severance package or he would initiate layoffs. In the fall of 1990, Dinkins had threatened fifteen thousand layoffs and then backed away. But Stanley Hill, the head of the Municipal Labor Council, says he never doubted that this mayor would do exactly what he threatened. The unions, having little choice, accepted the offer, and Giuliani had achieved the remarkable feat of enshrining a no-layoffs pledge at the heart of his budget-cutting campaign.

And, like the rank-and-file Harlemites referred to by Butts, Stanley Hill, an African-American and an ardent Dinkins supporter, was surprised to find common cause with Giuliani. He had grown accustomed to seeing agreements get "caught in the quagmire" with Dinkins' people and to learning of ad-hoc policies after the fact. The intense discipline of the Giuliani team, Hill says, means that the Mayor and his labor-relations chief, Randy Levine, speak with one voice, and that policy is consistent, if not always to Hill's liking. Perhaps it's simply the diplomacy of a man in a tight spot, but Hill describes Giuliani as "a very sensitive mayor in terms of trying to address very tough issues."

There were two quite different lessons that the Mayor might have taken from his early experience with labor, with the budget, and with quality-of-life issues. One was that the same tactics that had worked for him as United States Attorney—raise the level of confrontation, and don't bind yourself by the traditional rules of engagement—would serve him equally well as Mayor. The other was that in politics persuasion can preclude the need for conflict—an issue can be framed so that all sides win. Randy Levine says, "There are two ways to conduct labor relations: 'In your face, go to war' or 'We're in it together, and we'll solve the problems together and work together.' We've made it clear that it was in nobody's interest to go to war." Levine is widely considered a star in the administration, largely because he has achieved his goals without either demonizing or humiliating the unions. Giuliani, on the other hand, seems both temperamentally and strategically wedded to the principle of "In your face, go to war." Perhaps he can't shake the idea that his job is to bring bad guys to book.

Giuliani has a unique gift for finding the bedrock of intransigence in otherwise conciliatory figures. Just as he was achieving his unexpected détente with labor, he began belaboring Schools Chancellor Ramon Cortines for failing to "crush" the schools bureaucracy; the Mayor essentially accused the Chancellor of cowardice. Cortines, as it turned out, had almost as saintly a conception of himself as the Mayor had of himself. And so a dispute that could have been settled quietly by intermediaries, as had happened in the past, instead had to be played out in public, with dire warnings and dreadful maledictions. The Mayor was destined to win not because the merits of the case were on his side—though they probably were—but because he controlled the budget. Cortines finally agreed to dismiss twenty-five hundred employees, as the Mayor had demanded; and *then* Giuliani summoned him to a midnight meeting at Gracie Mansion to insist that he also fire his chief budget official and his spokesman, or accept the imposition of a financial monitor.

The schools chancellor operates independently from the mayor; if Cortines had accepted such an ultimatum, he would virtually have been offering his fealty to Giuliani. Perhaps the Mayor so grossly misjudged Cortines that he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thought he could force his submission. Perhaps he assumed that "the merits" made such jurisdictional, or merely human, issues irrelevant. Cortines quit rather than kiss the ring, virtually the entire city rallied to his side, and the Mayor needlessly sacrificed some of his store of good will. He seemed more concerned about power than principle. "You don't club an elderly, slight Latino gentleman" is how one veteran of city government has put it. "Mayor Wagner would have enveloped him in kindness." This mayor's refusal to hug his adversaries may well be an important part of his appeal, but, as a practical matter, how could he have so utterly misread the situation? His outside advisers told him that he was making a mistake, but they didn't get through. One of them says, "He's got all these young guys around him who said"—of Cortines—" 'Fuck him! He can't do this, he can't do that.' Who within that circle presented the other side?" The answer, apparently, was no one.

It wasn't anyone's job. Giuliani is the kind of man who forms brotherhoods, with himself at the center. A lawyer who has known him since they both were assistants in the United States Attorney's office, fresh out of law school, says, "Even then, there were Rudy people. I always liked Rudy, but I could never be a close friend. Friendship was always about loyalty." And when Giuliani became United States Attorney, he surrounded himself with a Praetorian Guard of loyalists, known as the Yes-rudys. "They were all real short, and all real devoted to Rudy," as one assistant recalls. The bright young men and women who had done the prosecutorial work, however, had too much self-esteem simply to submit to the leader's higher wisdom, and Giuliani, most of them say, was open to criticism. But it was the blood brothers whom Giuliani brought with him to City Hall. And Giuliani's First Deputy Mayor, Peter Powers, is a friend from boyhood, with whom he has a relationship of supreme trust.

The inner circle's job is to execute the Mayor's will, not to challenge it. The Giuliani administration has, in fact, proved to be stunningly of one mind, especially in comparison with City Halls past. One high-ranking administration official says, "These guys are incredibly cohesive; they would throw themselves in front of a bus for the Mayor. There was the antithesis with Dinkins—they would gladly have thrown *him* in front of the bus." Three different commissioners said that they were struck by the remarkable absence of "back-channelling" inside the administration; there was no point, since the only godfather was the Mayor himself. Reporters accustomed to the perpetual battle of wills inside the Dinkins and Koch administrations have found covering Giuliani immensely frustrating: none of the important people tell tales out of school.

But neither, by most accounts, will they come to the Mayor with a hard truth. "There's no one who is of independent stature," one commissioner admits. And only a few outside figures, including the political consultant David Garth and the Liberal Party chairman, Ray Harding, have a relationship of trust with the Mayor. The over-all effect of this system is to lash the Mayor to the mast of his own passionate certitudes. Inside the circle of trust, consensus reigns; outside lie willful stupidity and sheer malice. To a really remarkable degree, this mayor treats dissenting opinion as personal attack. He labelled Public Advocate Mark Green's suggestion that private garages repair police cars "idiotic," despite the fact that the Police Department had been considering the same idea. Green is, of course, a political rival, but Giuliani has even picked on his fellow-Republicans in the City Council. The Mayor and his men don't seem to believe that there are neutral parties—just adherents and detractors.

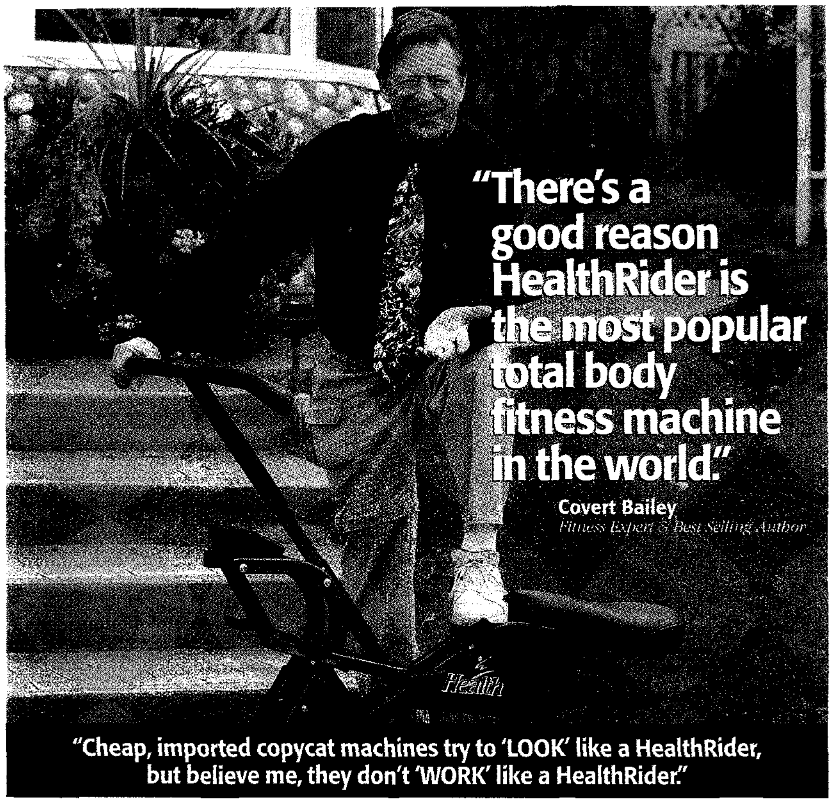
The Mayor seems to regard the press with the mixture of condescension and acute suspicion common among professional athletes. In his days as a priestly prosecutor, Giuliani enjoyed a compliant—even reverential—press, and he fed it with his melodramatic press conferences. But when he became a candidate he got the usual rough treatment, and then some. In the 1993 campaign, the liberal media largely bought into Dinkins' formulation of the contest. A *Times Magazine* article described Giuliani as "a throwback" with "a Wonder Bread image" who was hoping "to lead a radically changed city back to an idyllic time that may never have been."

"When I first learned that men and women have significantly different ways of thinking, I said, 'Excellent! This calls for a drink!' "

Giuliani felt deeply aggrieved, and he responded, characteristically, by shutting out much of the press for several months during the campaign. Nor has his resolve wavered since. Reporters deemed unduly critical, which is to say virtually all of them, have little or no access either to the Mayor or to his people. The Mayor does not feel obliged to explain himself. Instead, he appears before friendly television interviewers, or serves as host of radio talk shows in which he solves traffic and sanitation and quality-of-life problems over the phone. David Garth says, "I don't think he has fully realized that the relation with the press is not that of a U.S. Attorney," but adds that he's learning.

I was unable to pass the guilty-until-proved-innocent test. My phone calls to City Hall were rarely returned. When I finally reached the Mayor's spokeswoman, Cristyne Lategano, she was brusquely impatient, as if I were an autograph seeker pestering the Mayor. She refused even to acknowledge that the Mayor would not speak to me. Finally, I was indirectly told that a sympathetic article I wrote about Chancellor Cortines had convinced Giuliani that I could not be fair to him, even though the article endorsed many of the Mayor's criticisms of the Chancellor. The threshold of acceptability had been set so high that balance itself could be viewed as a sign of perverse resistance. I did what reporters do in such cases: I asked the Mayor's most important outside advisers, and one of his closest friends, to intervene for me. They all did—to no avail. The half-dozen people closest to the Mayor, including his wife, Donna Hanover, also refused to speak to me, or declined to return my calls. Some of them, I was told, were simply afraid to do so. Only Randy Levine had the confidence to ignore the mayoral ban.

THROUGHOUT last spring and summer, the Mayor flashed his bright sword, and his enemies fell down like new-mown wheat. When the Board of Education reached a settlement with custodians that eliminated none of the onerous features of the existing contract, Giuliani demanded that the pact be renegotiated; he threatened to replace the custodians with private contractors, and the custodians, long the symbol of intransigent and self-serving unionism,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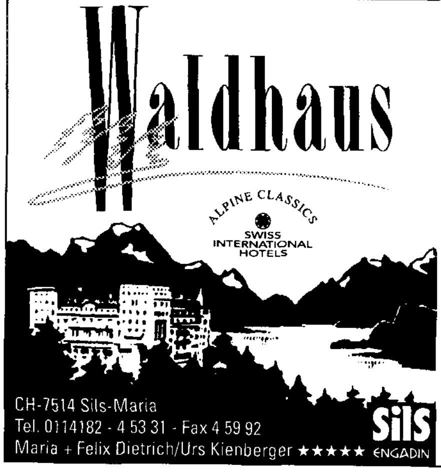

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meekly capitulated. Giuliani made a similar threat to the sanitation men, and they then signed a contract providing for major gains in productivity. In mid-June, the budget, with one billion one hundred million dollars in cuts, was passed by the City Council despite predictions of doom.

Actually, the budget wasn't so much passed as hammered through by Speaker Vallone, who runs the City Council more or less the way Sam Rayburn used to ride herd over the House of Representatives. In order for a mayor to preserve good relations with the City Council, he has to do very little beyond staying on the Speaker's good side. This was not hard for Mayor Giuliani to do, since Vallone, a moderate Democrat from Queens, largely agreed with his program. Nevertheless, the Mayor, perhaps emboldened by his string of victories, now proceeded to squander this precious asset. When he submitted a new round of cuts in October, after it became clear that the previous cuts wouldn't close the deficit, he somehow neglected to tell the Speaker in advance that he was proposing to cut the Council's own budget by fourteen per cent and also to have another go at programs that Vallone had persuaded him to restore in order to mollify outraged members. It seemed suicidal to both alienate the Speaker and cut deeply into the "member items" that allow councilmen to keep their constituents happy. Member items are among those tacky political realities that cost very little to acknowledge and can be cashed in at many times their value. A former Council staff member says, "The way Koch always kept the City Council happy was to say, 'O.K., here's your fifty thousand dollars for the Queens Library.' What he had then was very malleable putty. Now there's none of that finesse."

Now, in fact, the putty quickly developed backbone. The Council sought to restore ninety-six million dollars of the Mayor's eight hundred million dollars in proposed cuts and find the money elsewhere. After some haggling, the two sides were separated by as little as eight million dollars. According to officials in both the Council and the Office of Management and Budget, Speaker Vallone and Abraham Lackman, then the director of O.M.B., reached agreement four times on ways to bridge the gap, and each time Lackman reported back that the Mayor had rejected the package. Apparently, the Mayor had decided that he preferred a confrontation. And Vallone, an eminently conciliatory figure, for once reached the same conclusion. The Council passed its own package of cuts and overrode a mayoral veto. The Mayor, once again raising the level of confrontation to new heights, vowed to simply ignore the Council's package, on the ground that it violated the City Charter. Vallone took the Mayor to court—a virtual act of lèse-majesté. The Mayor ultimately got his way, thanks to a court ruling, but at a cost that, as with Cortines, was absurdly and unnecessarily high.

"Big mistake," sighs Ed Koch, now the wise old hound to Giuliani's impetuous spaniel. Ever since the Board of Estimate was eliminated, in 1989, Koch points out, the Council has had real power over the budget but has barely exercised it. Now, he predicts, instead of sharing the responsibility for the far graver cuts to come, it "will torture him," making sure that the Mayor is blamed for the sufferings of the poor. Koch says that he also found himself shaking his head when Giuliani, at the end of the year, mounted a futile, and utterly solitary, campaign to bully Chancellor Cortines into stepping down. "There's nothing wrong with being confrontational if you're convinced that a line has to be drawn," says Koch, who was considered abrasive until Giuliani came along. "But do it in a way that relates to the power you bring to the subject. To take on a battle that you can't win is counterproductive." That's axiomatic, at least to a politician. Giuliani has said that he continued his 1989 campaign even after he knew that he would fail. It was, he thought, the right thing to do.

People who know Giuliani well think that the Savonarola image is overdone. David Garth says that when he first saw Giuliani, while he himself was working for the 1989 Koch campaign, he thought him "very tough, but very inflexible, insensitive." When he came to know him, though, he found that, unlike Koch, Giuliani shows a very different face in private from the one he turns to the world. "There's a joie de vivre about him, there's a spirit that he has," Garth says, adding that it reminds him of both Koch and former mayor John Lindsay. Garth recalls how "unbelievably gracious" the Mayor was when Cuomo suffered his startling defeat. And then, when he appears in public, Garth says, "all of a sudden he kind of pulls back and there's a thing"—and Garth makes the motion of a curtain coming down. A few reporters have said they were surprised to find that the Mayor can be witty and charming away from the glare of the television lights.

I happened to see Giuliani one morning while he was addressing a class at the Robert F. Wagner Intermediate School, on East Seventy-sixth Street. He sat on a stool in front of the class, his glasses folded in one hand. A student asked

A BED OF LEAVES

He climbed to the copse, a conspicuous place near water,
And crawled under two bushes sprouting from one stem (olive
And wild olive), a thatch so close neither gale-force winds
Nor sunlight nor cloudbursts could penetrate: it was here
Odysseus snuggled and heaped on his mattress of leaves
An eiderdown of leaves, enough to make a double bed
In winter, whatever the weather, and smiled to himself
When he saw his bed and stretched out in the middle of it
And let even more of the fallen leaves fall over him:
As when a lonely man on a lonely farm smoors the fire
And hides a turf-sod in the ashes to save an ember,
So was his body in the bed of leaves its own kindling,
And sleep settled on him like ashes and closed his eyelids.

—Michael Longley

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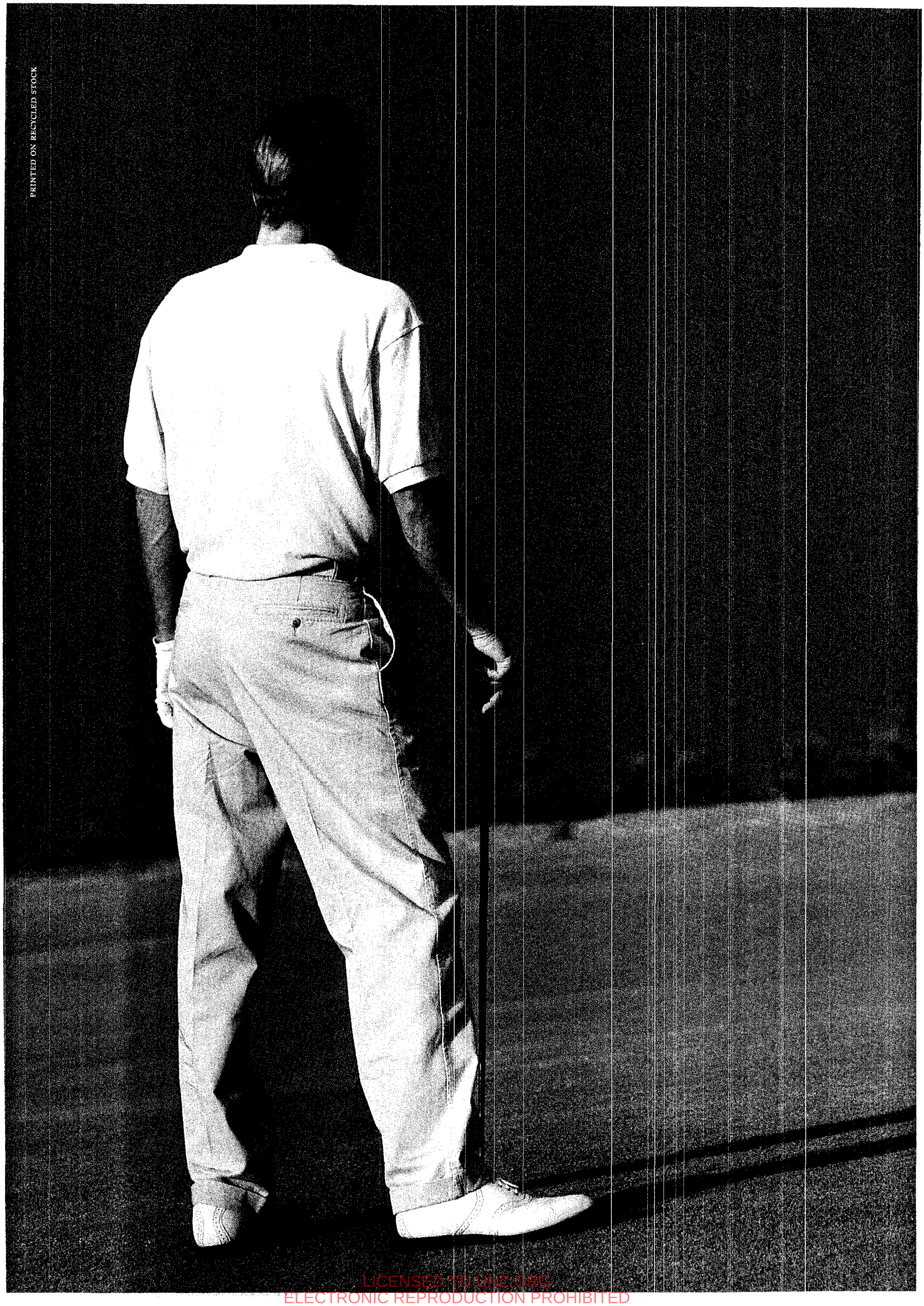

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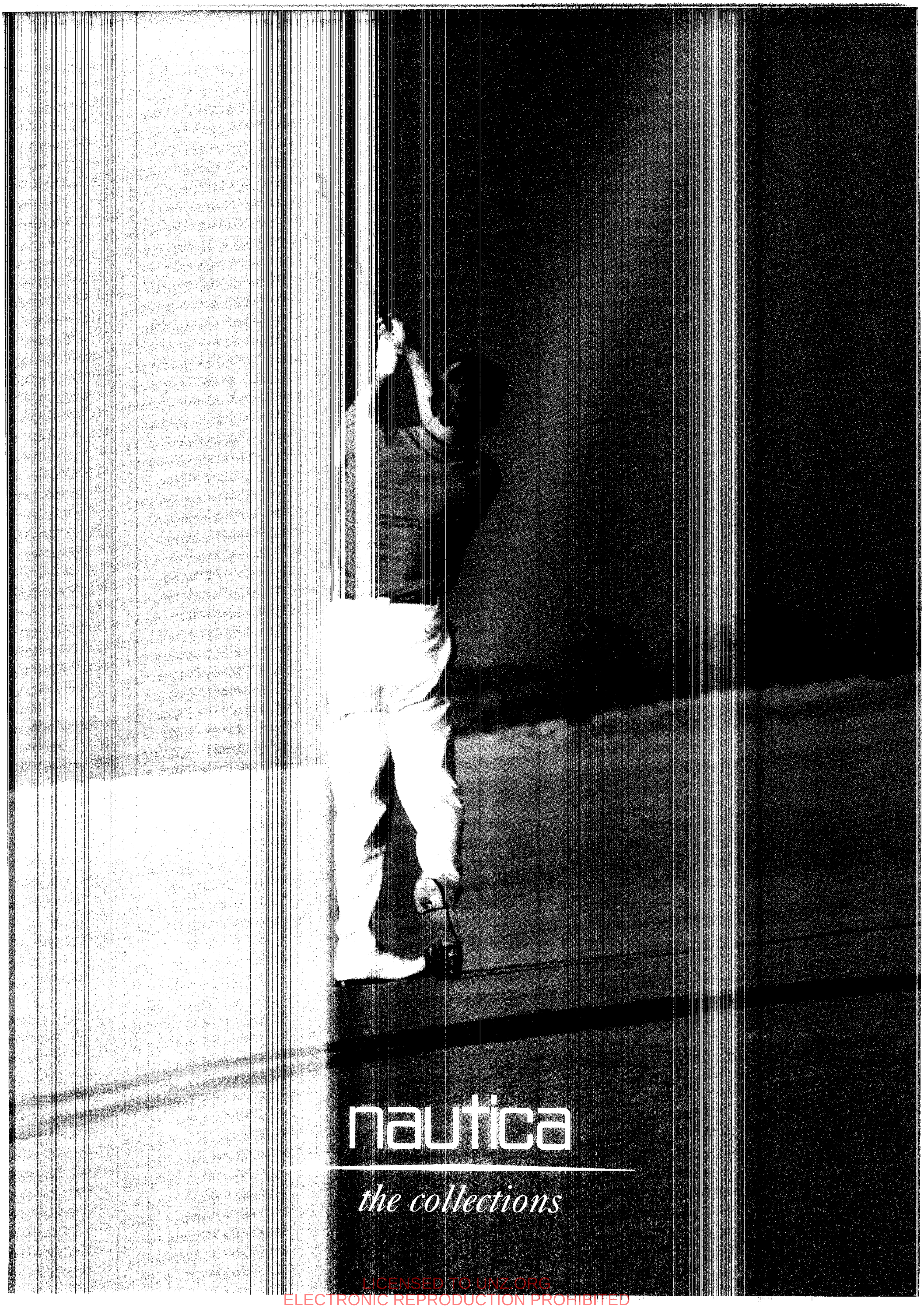
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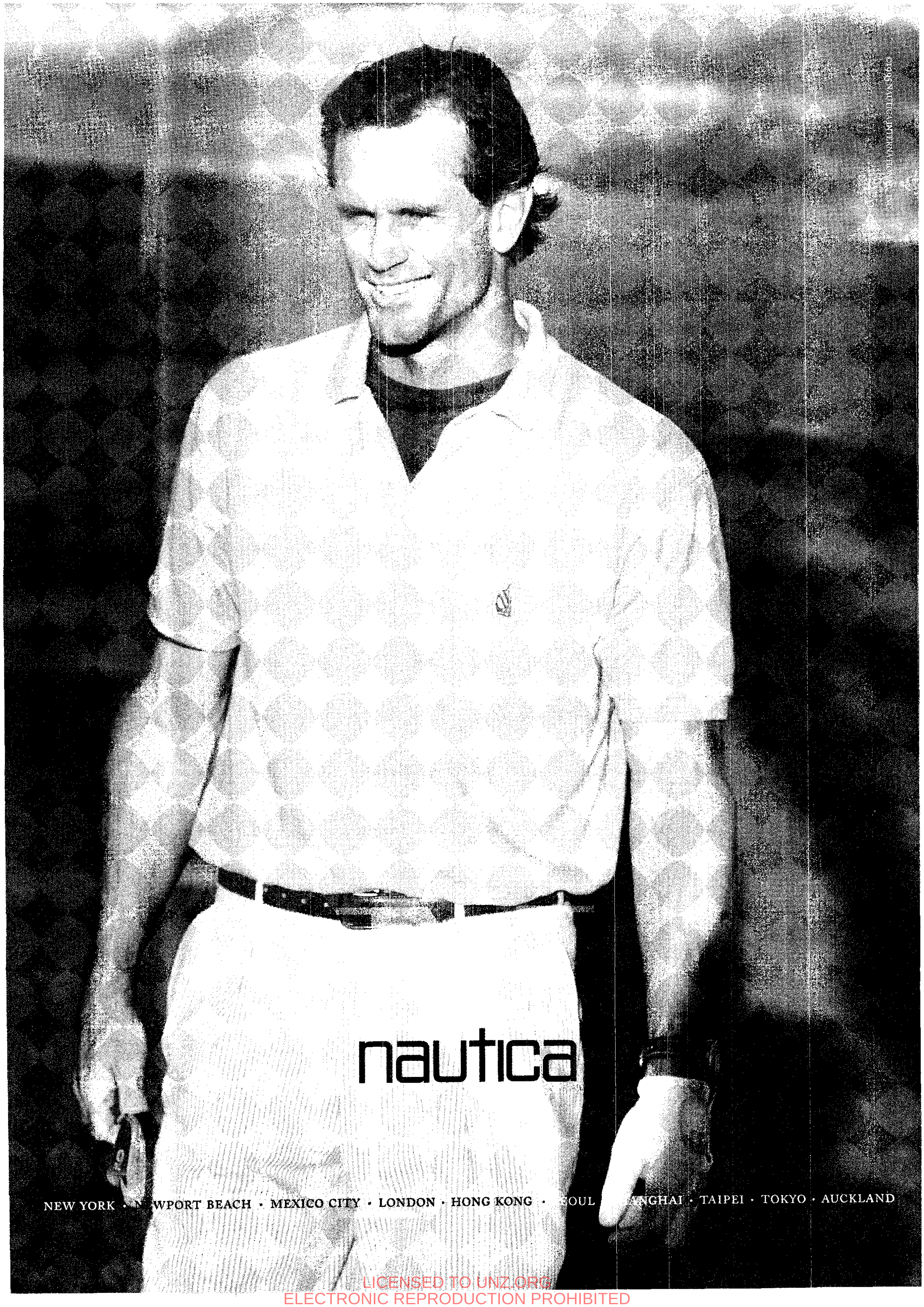
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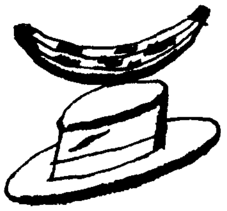
him about his favorite teacher, and the Mayor, in his hokey, from-the-heart manner, said, "My mother was a *great* teacher," and he went on to talk about how his mother had read him history books from the time he was two or three. He bantered with the kids, asking them if they really favored the sports teams whose logos they wore on their sweatshirts. He was earnest and patiently didactic on abstruse subjects like Medicaid reimbursement. And when the crafty teacher presented him with a copy of *Opera News* he beamed. He told the class he had first learned about opera from a high-school teacher who would open a copy of *Opera News* and then tell the story of whatever work was coming up on the Metropolitan Opera broadcasts that Saturday afternoon. Then he talked about all the different ways he'd seen Tosca leap from the battlements of the Castel Sant' Angelo. The Mayor doesn't just love opera; he loves nineteenth-century Italian opera, with its heroic gestures and noble doom. The *Newsday* columnist Murray Kempton, who has traded opera CDs with Giuliani, recently noted that there was something exhilarating, if unsettling, about a public figure inspired by "the example of temperaments whose last hours are consoled by the dignity of having lost all save honor."

This is, in fact, a fine description of the Mayor in the aftermath of George Pataki's gubernatorial victory. Nothing in Giuliani's first year has been quite so operatic as his miscalculated endorsement of Mario Cuomo. The Mayor defied not only his own party but many of his own advisers. Ed Koch, himself a Cuomo supporter, told him, "You *have* to give the Republicans the fig leaf of an endorsement." His friend John Gross said, "You have two options—support Pataki or be neutral." And Giuliani, Gross recalls, said, "No, I don't." Cuomo was the incarnation of and the chief spokesman for the big-city liberal Democratic tradition that Giuliani had campaigned against. But Giuliani apparently reasoned that New York City would do better with a Democratic big spender than with a Republican taxcutter. No less important, he must have understood that the endorsement would be seen as a heroic act of principle among New York's embattled liberals—a critical consideration for a Republican in an overwhelmingly Democratic and liberal city. The *Times* lavished praise on the Mayor for his courage. But in fact a blithe indifference to the consequences of his acts was pretty much the hallmark of the Mayor's first year in office.

With Giuliani, enough is never enough. Not only did he endorse Cuomo but he then savaged Pataki as a "puppet" of Senator Alfonse D'Amato—a puppet under whom "ethics will be trashed." And he repeated these formulations day after day, upstate and downstate. Giuliani seemed like a man possessed. What was he possessed by? "Deep anger," Ed Koch says, generously adding, "Everyone's entitled to at least one deep anger." Clearly, D'Amato and Giuliani, the machine pol and the last upright man, have got under each other's skin in recent years. Giuliani, in his operatic, prosecutorial soul, may have so intensely relished the prospect of assailing the dark prince—Baron Scarpia—that he was blinded to reason. Perhaps he was gift-wrapping the present he had given the city's liberal voters. But there is also a more prosaic explanation: when Giuliani commits himself to an end, he adopts any means that come to hand. Maybe it's auto-suggestion, but Giuliani seems to be able to pursue even the most dubious goals with unwavering passion. Or, as David Garth puts it, "when a guy like Rudy thinks there's a lot at stake, he doesn't slide in with his feet, he slides in with his head."

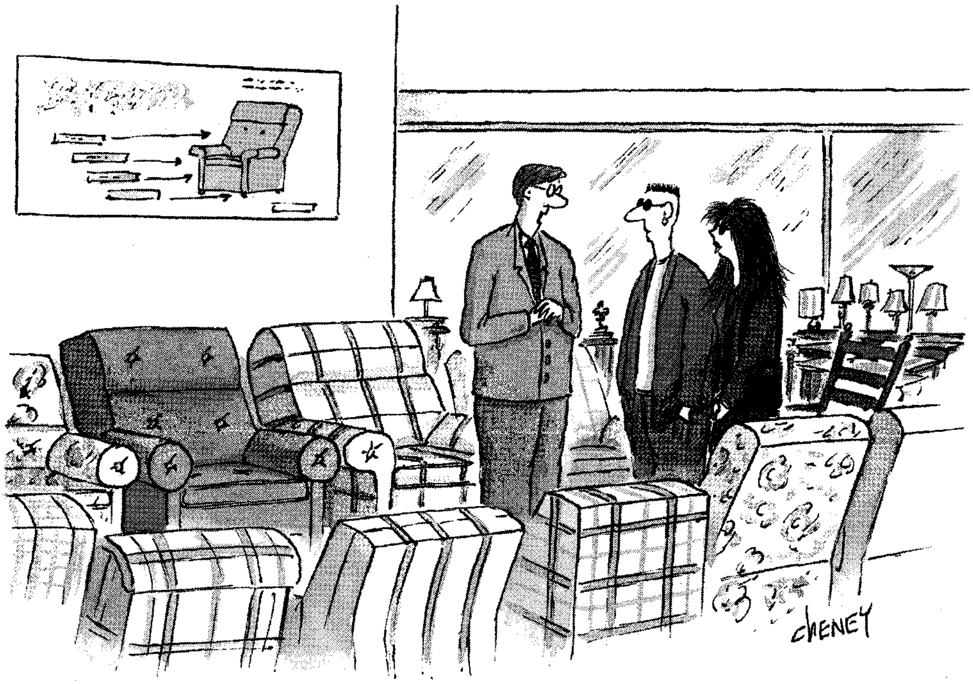


In this case, of course, the Mayor was out by about ten feet. As in his single-minded confrontation with the City Council, he almost guaranteed that he would face retribution. Guy Molinari, the Staten Island Borough President, the Pataki campaign chief in New York City, and a former close ally of the Mayor, says, with an air of profound satisfaction, "In my entire life I cannot recall any political figure that damaged himself so badly as what the Mayor did with the Cuomo endorsement." Supporting Cuomo, he says, was "an unpardonable sin," and was made all the worse by the volley of abuse. If the Mayor had supported Pataki, Molinari says, he would have been a national figure within the Republican Party. Now he has no discernible future in the Party, and might well face a serious challenge—one that Koch thinks he could lose—in the Republican mayoral primary in 1997 (though the Cuomo endorsement, by endearing Giuliani to Democrats, may have made him virtually unbeatable in a general election). Molinari concludes, "He blew it all and then some in one fell swoop," which is about as operatic an epitaph as you could wish.

In the period after the election, Giuliani went directly from defending his decision to oppose Pataki to praising the Governor's new budget, without passing through the intermediate stage of admitting that he might have been wrong. Yet Giuliani must have realized that at least the budgetary element of his initial calculation was mistaken. It's highly unlikely that if Cuomo had been reëlected he could have delivered significant aid to the city, given the state's four-billion-dollar deficit. Pataki, on the other hand, was doing the Mayor a huge favor by proposing drastic cuts in welfare and Medicaid, which would free the city from up to eight hundred million dollars in obligations. Another way of putting this is that Pataki was sparing Giuliani the need to stiff the city's neediest citizens by doing it himself.

Giuliani is not a tax-cutting conservative, as Pataki is. What Giuliani believes in is budgetary discipline—living within your means. New Yorkers are not long on discipline, or on living within their means, but in this regard Giuliani, helped along by the force of circumstances, has brought about a real shift in thinking. "Giuliani's great victory has been intellectual," Mitchell Moss says. "He has taken the intellectual debate from 'How do we get from one budget cycle to another?' to 'How can we prune government to cope with stable revenues?' " There is now a fairly widespread recognition that New York City cannot tax itself out of its problems, as it has in the past.

Giuliani's views of poverty also seem to reflect a temperamental rather than an ideological conservatism. In his State of the City speech, last January, he ringingly declared, "Never will we let New York abandon its tradition of helping the neediest among us." On the other hand, he has often delivered lectures on the virtues of self-reliance, and



"Well, you've certainly come to the right place. In fact, we carry an extensive line of furniture that doesn't suck."

• •

he recently suggested that a tuition hike at CUNY colleges might be good for students, since it could force them "to work harder or take out a loan." In his first budget Giuliani proposed serious cuts in youth programs, food kitchens, and day-care centers, all of which serve the poorest citizens. While the cuts might have been needed, the fact that other services were spared the axe raised a question of equity. In the words of the ever-pugnacious Mark Green, "He's certainly bitten the bullet when it comes to facing down low-income residents who are losing a bunch of programs; he has flinched big time when it comes to facing up to the bureaucratic waste of the Police and Fire Departments and in the area of tax subsidies."

Still, charges that Giuliani favors the rich just won't stick, hard though some of his critics try to make them do so: he had too much fun outraging the Wall Street plutocracy as United States Attorney. But his old-fashioned creed of self-reliance makes it hard for him to recognize that poor and working-class New Yorkers have a legitimate need of government. The Mayor went to Washington to demonstrate his support for the Democrats' crime bill, and especially the preventive portions. But then in his own budget he proposed to cut spending almost in half at the Department of Youth Services, which sponsors just such programs. Giuliani has also resolutely refused to acknowledge that his cuts, necessary or not, will hurt the poor, and insists on perversely describing the deficit as an "opportunity." Harvey Robins, who was the director of operations under David Dinkins and is one of the most thoughtful of Giuliani's critics, points out that "if you have a disdain for government, then cutting doesn't matter—you don't sweat at night about what it's going to mean."

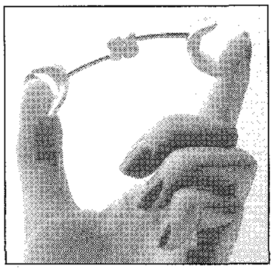
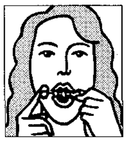
If the Mayor really cared about the poor or really believed in government, Robins argues, he would approach the job of cutting and reforming with the same passion he applies to issues of crime and the quality of life. During the campaign, Giuliani talked about the vogue idea of "reinventing government," and designated Richard Schwartz, one of his chief aides, as his point man on reform. One member of the Mayor's team cites such initiatives as workfare and privatization as signs that his administration means business. But a recent Columbia University study faulted the administration for failing to make reform a high priority, and officials at the agency level say that the pressure from City Hall has been to cut, not to change. Perhaps it has to be. One commissioner says, "You need a few years to do intelligent restructuring, but they don't have them. All they can try to do is manage a disaster."

The Mayor frittered away much of the good will he had earned with his Cuomo endorsement when he produced his draft budget this year. He called for cuts of two billion one hundred million dollars in welfare and Medicaid, which was four hundred million dollars more than the amount Governor Pataki was proposing for the city. Cuts of this magnitude, for all the Mayor's talk about "opportunity," guaranteed increased misery for the poor. Since the Governor, to no one's surprise, refused to change his own budget to suit the Mayor, the welfare and Medicaid cuts will amount to no more than eight hundred million dollars. Last week, the city's budget director, Marc Shaw, ordered agency heads to prepare a new across-the-board cut of three per cent, a move designed to save three hundred million dollars. This was on top of proposed cuts of six hundred million dollars, including huge chunks from the schools, CUNY, the foster-care system, and day-care services. The Mayor is having another go at the Department of Youth Services, whose budget the City Council restored last year. He has proposed eliminating all of the city's youth-employment programs.

The city is in a genuine bind: all the options are painful. Since so many city services are devoted to the poor, the budget will be balanced on their backs almost by definition. Giuliani has done willingly and forthrightly what David Dinkins did hesitantly and inconsistently. But compassion does not have to be a byword for extravagance or indiscipline. A more compassionate mayor would listen to some of the proposals advanced by fiscal and policy experts and public officials—a deferral of proposed tax cuts, an increase in the property-tax rate for homeowners, a greater stress on labor savings—rather than question the bona fides of their authors. And he would frame the issue differently: he would not put "Have a Nice Day" on his battering ram. Language matters; gestures matter. Giuliani's heroes, F.D.R. and LaGuardia, understood that very well. A more compassionate mayor would protect what little he could, and plant seeds that might flower when the chill finally ends. Such things may seem small—at least, next to the great imperative of discipline—but they would help New Yorkers make it to the other side.

In mid-January, Mayor Giuliani used his second State of the City address to recount his achievements from the past year and, shockingly, to extend the hand of friendship to many of the public officials he had bulldozed along the way. At one point, he even directly addressed Peter Vallone, seated below him in the great amphitheatre of the City Council chamber, to promise, "Instead of presenting you with a fait accompli, what we will do instead is we will work with you in advance"—thus conceding that he had used the fait accompli as a conscious tactic against the city's own legislature. Apparently, Giuliani understood that in the coming year, when he would be asking huge sacrifices, he would have to adopt a more consensual style. But then, as he turned to the problems of the school system, the Mayor suddenly shifted into a new gear. "With each day of *temporizing* and *placating*," he cried, leaning away from the podium to let his left arm rise and plunge in accusation, "fewer and fewer children are properly educated!" And so on. It had taken about thirty-five minutes for the ardor and the anger of the old Rudy to burn their way through the conciliatory façade of the new.

The new Rudy never had much of a chance. Within weeks, he was feuding with the City Council again, threatening to ignore an initiative he didn't like. And then, a few weeks later, the curtain rang down on the era of good feeling with Giuliani's massacre of the non-loyalists. Some of the people he was firing, the Mayor explained, "carry on the philosophy and agenda of the prior administration." The Mayor furnished no evidence for this grave charge. In fact, virtually the only attribute that unified the group of several hundred was that they had held their current jobs, or something very much like them, in the Dinkins administration. Their attitude was more likely to be professional than political. "If you're loyal to the agency

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you work for, you would think that's a good thing for whoever the mayor is," a commissioner says. One who made the list—but whose execution was ultimately stayed—was a low-level epidemiologist with the Department of Health. Had she been discovered practicing Democratic epidemiology? Others among the dismissed openly endorsed the Mayor's program. One was John Fager, a mid-level official in the Department of Consumer Affairs who, as the head of a parents' organization, had enthusiastically supported the Mayor in his holy war against Chancellor Cortines. Apparently, the Mayor and his people simply wanted to make room for patronage employees. Commissioners were faxed lists of holdovers and instructed to dismiss them; the merits had nothing to do with it.

Patronage is a time-honored feature of big-city government. But since the kind of government that engages in patronage is scarcely the kind that Giuliani promised to bring, he may have felt the need to raise the issue of loyalty and partisanship, thus implying a moral failing on the part of those let go. There was an element of gratuitous cruelty to the entire exercise. One of the dismissed recalls that, fearful for his job, he had asked several weeks earlier whether he should take a second severance package that the city had offered and leave. He was assured by City Hall officials that he needn't. By the time he was fired, severance was no longer available; he was out in the cold. Another says that he got a call from his commissioner at five o'clock on Friday, and was instructed to come to the office. "There I was told that I was dismissed effective immediately," he recounts. "When I said, 'How immediately?' he said, 'Right away.' I was allowed to come in over the weekend to clean out my desk." He couldn't tell whether he should take the dismissal personally. "I'm not sure that anyone thought about it, and that's what was kind of scary," he concludes. "There was just no concept that these are people who have lives, who have families, and who are immediately going to be in crisis."

And yet loyalty is never far from the thoughts of City Hall. Many of the early victims of the purge were press aides, for it was their agendas that were the most suspect. This was a theme of long standing, running all the way back to the Mayor's demand in April that Chancellor Cortines dismiss his press spokesman, John Beckman. Press officers tend to be on good terms with the press, which may in itself have brought them under suspicion. The Mayor's own press secretary, Cristyne Lategano, has set a standard of unflinching loyalty to the Mayor and relentless hostility to the press which few can match; she was recently rewarded for her militance with a promotion to the position of communications director. Even the hero of the quality-of-life campaign, Police Commissioner Bratton, fell into disfavor over his avid, and quite successful, courtship of the media. As part of the February housecleaning, the administration ordered Bratton's spokesman, John Miller, to cut his office in half—a demand that was widely seen as a rebuke to the chief. Miller angrily quit rather than comply, and several days later Lategano explained to a reporter that Bratton had "put glamor over crime-fighting." In an unusually expansive mood, she went on, "Now is the time to get serious. This is a reality check." The Mayor, incredibly, seemed to be using public humiliation to pressure his biggest star into quitting. Or, more likely, given the Cortines precedent, the Mayor was using humiliation as a tool for the maintenance of control.

The notion that the dismissed press officers were likely by virtue of their past experience in government to have been "off agenda" seems faintly absurd, not to mention demeaning. I had talked to one of the victims just a day or two before the purge, and when I turned back to my notes I found he had pointed out that, unlike Dinkins, this mayor kept himself thoroughly informed of policy issues at the commissioner level, and that, strangely, if perhaps admirably, he "almost goes out of his way not to accept" media opportunities. And when I asked about the effect of cuts he said, "They haven't yet affected service to the public very much." One of his colleagues said, *after* he was fired, "There were so many things that were going in the right direction with this administration; many of the hard choices were made."

Personal loyalty is the precondition for control, and the Mayor's preoccupation with the subject seems to be associated with his bedrock faith in discipline and centralized authority. In the early months of 1994, City Hall issued a series of memos stipulating that all contacts with elected officials, no matter how trivial, be cleared through City Hall; that all publicly released documents be cleared through City Hall; that all documents requiring the Mayor's signature be submitted through a Byzantine process; and so on. Under Mayors Koch and Dinkins, a former official says, commissioners were left to decide whether a document or a media contact or a political request required a heads-up to City Hall. "There was an understanding," he says, "that you were all there to help the Mayor and protect the Mayor." That assumption no longer applies. He recalls a routine application for a foundation grant that came back from City Hall with a disclaimer to the effect that the Mayor had signed on the basis of information attested by the commissioner. Apparently, even commissioners cannot be trusted. In years past, they had been given a chance to contest budget cuts with O.M.B., at least at the margins; now they receive the numbers after the fact, a few hours before the public.

The central paradox of Rudy Giuliani's tenure to date is that precisely those qualities which have allowed him to succeed where others have failed—his peremptoriness, his certitude, his indifference to jurisdictional lines, and even to the consequences of his acts—have divided the city and alienated his natural allies. His temperament served him well as United States Attorney, but only up to a point. And in his time as mayor that point seems to have already arrived. When he took office, far more people than he himself recognized were wishing for his success; now he has made the prospect of his failure delicious. The Greeks would say that the Mayor is showing signs of hubris, though perhaps, in deference to the Mayor's tastes, his situation should be described in operatic terms. His favorite opera, he told the class at the Robert F. Wagner school, is Verdi's "Otello." "Otello," of course, is the story of a noble ruler undone by pride—and too blind to see his folly until it's too late. ♦

John Daly, out of golf since Aug. 28 after he scuffled with a spectator for 3½ months, will return to the PGA Tour in the 1995 season-opening Mercedes Championship.
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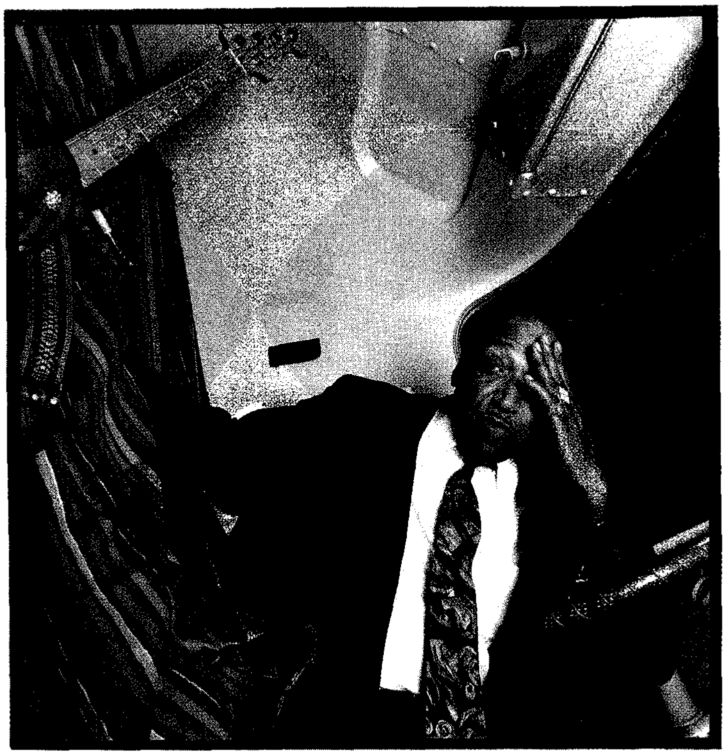
POPULAR CHRONICLES

DEVOTION ROAD

What is it like to sing for Jesus in America today? The life is almost the same as it was fifty years ago—when the Jackson Southernaires first hit the gospel highway.

BY SUSAN ORLEAN

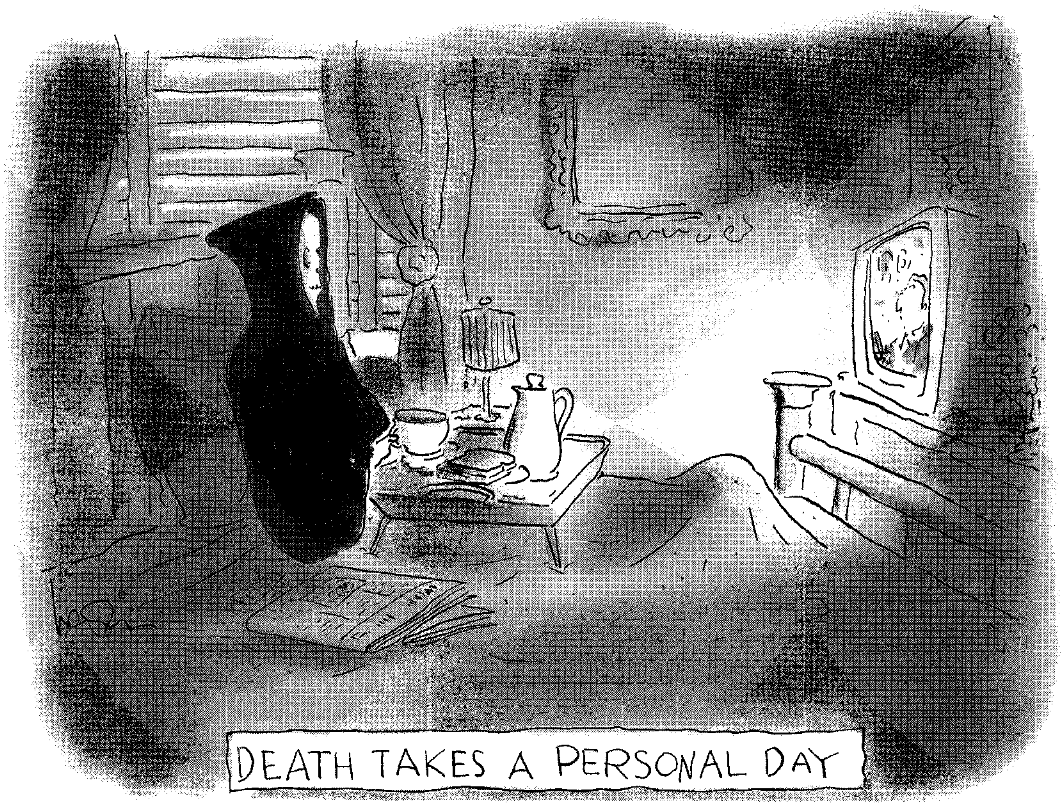


Holy rolling: the singer Huey Williams on the Southernaires' bus.

SUSAN COPEN OKEN

THE biggest, nicest thing a travelling gospel group might pray for is a bus. Usually, gospel groups consider themselves blessed if they book a show, and truly blessed if they can also find a way to get there; sometimes they get the call but they don't have a ride. Flying is rarely an option, because it costs too much, and because gospel concerts are often in places that are underserved by airlines, like Demopolis, Alabama, and Madison, Georgia. The Jackson Southernaires, who have been singing in gospel programs around the country virtually every weekend for the last fifty years, used to travel from show to show crowded into whatever car they could get their hands on, and they thanked God if the car got them to the program and back before it broke down. In 1965, they sang in a gospel competition in Detroit, and a fan of theirs bet a fan of the Mighty Clouds of Joy a substantial sum that the Southernaires would win. The Mighty Clouds were heavy favorites but the Southernaires prevailed, and their fan was so grateful that he bought them a bus with some of his winnings. The Southernaires are now on their third bus. In a previous life, their bus worked for Trailways; now it is painted silver and white, has a license plate that says "BUCKLE UP WITH JESUS," and has "The Jackson Southernaires" stencilled in large, loopy script on the back and both sides.

The bus attracts attention. Once, at a diner in Florida, a truck driver who was hauling a carnival ride from Tampa to Birmingham came over to the Southernaires' table, introduced himself, and said, "I heard you-all sing thirty years ago, in a union hall in Suffolk, Virginia, and I been dreaming of meeting you ever since." Then he clapped his hands to his chest and exclaimed, "Thank Jesus for causing me to see your bus!" Another time, in Jackson, Mississippi, which is


DEATH TAKES A PERSONAL DAY

the group's base of operations, Mack Brandon, the Southernaires' driver, was outside checking the engine and the tires, and a woman pulled over to take a picture of the bus for her gospel scrapbook. She asked Mack to pose beside the front tire. He was in work clothes and didn't feel photogenic, but she persisted. Not long ago, I asked him if he had ever seen the photograph, and he said, "And *how!* That lady and me got engaged."

Sometimes the bus becomes a source of problems. Once, the Southernaires broke down somewhere between Nashville and Louisville and needed three days to raise the money for repairs. Another time, in Richmond, Virginia, the transmission blew up, but, fortunately, Willis Pittman—the lead singer in Willis Pittman and the Burden Lifters—lives in Richmond and is a mechanic, and he fixed the transmission for free. One night, in the middle of Ohio, a tire blew out and they ran out of gas at the same moment. A farmer heard the commotion and came out of his house, then went into his barn, found a tire that fitted the wheel, filled a can of gas, jacked up the bus, replaced the tire, filled the gas tank, pulled them back onto the road with his tractor, and then showed them his Ku Klux Klan membership card and asked them to be on their way.

THE gospel audience is probably the poorest of any mass audience in the country, and there are a thousand ways, like working at a K mart or doing construction, that most gospel singers could make more money than they do singing gospel; and most gospel singers don't make enough from their music to live on. It is a matter of devotion. Gospel music has complicated origins, but it primarily came out of the Southern black Church of God in Christ and the Holiness movement of the Methodist Church; musically, it is a union of English revival hymns and African song styles—call-and-response, moaning, shouting. In the thirties, gospel singers started travelling a circuit of auditoriums, churches, grange halls, and tent meetings, and through more than half a century the gospel highway has hardly changed. There are gospel records, but for most of the audience gospel is more a form of public worship and performance than something you listen to at home.

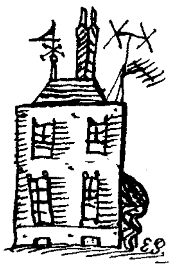
Over the past year, the Jackson Southernaires, as they have for most of the last five decades, left home nearly every Thursday and spent the weekend on the road. They sang in almost every state and in Ontario, in places as tiny as Blytheville, Arkansas, and as big as Brooklyn; they sang in half-empty church halls and in packed theatres; and last year, for the first time, they sang in France and were treated like stars. Not long ago, I travelled with the Southernaires on the gospel circuit. The first night on the road, I couldn't sleep, so I sat on the steps at the front of the bus and talked to Mack. We were on our way to Demopolis, Alabama, a rundown town in the center of the state. Mack said, "We're going way out in the country. You wait and see—people'll be coming to the show on mules." Mack has been a gospel-bus driver for twenty-five years. He started with Reverend Julius Cheeks and the Sensational Nightingales, and then he drove for Willie Neal Johnson and the Gospel Keynotes, and then, four years ago, he joined the Southernaires. Until 1965, he drove for Trailways. His home is in Roxboro, North Carolina, but he often stays at the Stonewall Jackson Motel, in Jackson, Mississippi. He said that his professional zenith was in 1981, after Willie Neal was nominated for a gospel Grammy, when the Gospel Keynotes rode to the ceremony in a limousine. "It wasn't just the limousine," he said. "When they came to pick me up, I opened the door, and there was Dionne Warwick. It was a completely beautiful experience. I opened the door, I saw Dionne, and I wanted to *die*."

When Mack gets tired, James Burks drives. That's his No. 2 job with the Southernaires; his No. 1 job is to play bass guitar and sing backup. Everyone in the group doubles up. Granard McClendon, the guitar player, who is slim and glib and is a sharp dresser, negotiates for the motel rooms when they pull into a town, and he also chooses which of their six sets of matching uniforms they will wear each night. During my trip with the group, Melvin Wilson sang tenor ("high") and falsetto ("top") and was also the sound engineer. He has satiny dark skin and a plump, pumpkin-shaped face. When Melvin was a teen-ager, in Robersonville, North Carolina, his father managed a gospel group called the Dynamic Powell Brothers. No one knew that Melvin could sing—not even Melvin. One day, he was riding home with the Dynamic Powell Brothers from a show and he just opened his mouth and let go. His voice was as cool and clear as water; the Dynamic Powell Brothers hired him on the spot. When I travelled with the Jackson Southernaires, the keyboard player was Gary Miles. (Melvin and Gary recently left to join another group, and have been replaced by Tony Nichols and Daryl Johnson.) Gary also hauled equipment out of the bus for shows and hauled it back afterward. In his off-road life, he is an actor. He has been an extra on "Murder, She Wrote" and "Magnum, P.I." Both times, he was cast as an officious waiter. He has skinny arms, a wide trunk, a nutty laugh, and an air of astonishment.

Maurice Surrell drums and sings and is the Southernaires' enforcer; that is, he writes up members of the group when they infract Southernaire rules. The rules take up fifteen typewritten pages. They were established years ago by Luther Jennings, one of the original Southernaires, who is now retired from gospel and teaches math at a high school in Jackson. Luther wanted the Southernaires to be known as the gentlemen of the gospel circuit, so his rules are strict and the fines are steep: twenty-five dollars for a wrinkled uniform, twenty-five dollars for unshined shoes, a hundred dollars for cursing, a hundred dollars for bringing a young lady to the restaurant where the group is eating, twenty-five dollars for hitting the wrong note in a song. Luther did not believe in leniency; if he transgressed, he fined himself. Luther was also the Southernaires' debt collector. Sometimes concert promoters were so moved by the Southernaires' performances that they misplaced the money they owed the Southernaires. This had a way of irritating Luther, so he usually carried one or more of the guns he owned—a single-action revolver, a bolt-action rifle, a .22, a .32, a Winchester, two .25-calibre revolvers, some twelve-gauge shotguns, two .357s, two .45s, and a couple of dainty handguns—which he could lay down, as if he were setting the table, when he went to collect from the promoter at the end of a show.

The Southernaires have two lead singers—Roger Bryant and Huey Williams. Roger is an ordained minister and an emphatic public speaker, so he is responsible for going onstage before each concert and urging the members of the audience to buy a Southernaires record or video before they leave. He has full cheeks, gap teeth, a sidelong glance, and parchment-colored skin. His hair is puffy and moldable; it looks different every day. His voice is choked and explosive. Onstage, Roger is a pacer, an arm-swinger, a hip-slapper, a fist-shaker, and a screamer. He is now thirty-nine years old. When he was small, he was in a group called the Sunbeam Jrs. His father, a foundry worker and preacher in Saginaw, Michigan, would stand him up on the kitchen table and beat him to make him sing.

Huey Williams is fifty-five. He has been with the group for twenty-nine years, and now when people think of the Southernaires they mostly think of Huey. He grew up in the country south of Jackson. Before he became a full-time gospel singer, he did construction work in Detroit and in New Orleans, but his enthusiasms are strictly rural. He once told me that people refer to him as the coon-hunting gospel singer. Currently, he has six Walker hounds; they live in big dog pens behind his house, in McComb, Mississippi. On his days off, Huey usually takes the dogs hunting or attends to hunting-related errands. One time when I visited him in McComb, we spent the day driving across the state to the taxidermist, to pick up a bobcat Huey had shot. Huey is a tall man with a broad chest and the steep cheekbones of a Cherokee. He has big dimples, blue eyes, and a thin mustache. He wears two chunky gold rings and a thick gold cuff; his hands are long and elegant, and his nails are smooth and shiny. The first time I met him, he took my chin in his hands, tilted it toward him, and said, "Take a good look at my face. Have you ever in your life seen blue eyes on a black man?" His speaking voice is sometimes brisk and commanding and sometimes whispery and intimate, and always tonic. I have heard him sing in a bass voice, which is so deep that it sounds like burping, and in a shrieking, afflicted tenor, and in a buttery, pliant baritone. When he was around thirty, his voice was so supple he could do anything with it; he believes that at the time he was simply the best singer in the whole world. Before a performance, when he is encircled by his fans, he walks around like Goliath. In the morning, when he wakes up hoarse from the show and creaky from sleeping on the bus, he looks like someone who thinks a lot about retiring. His wife, Mamie, who is a machine operator at a General Motors plant in Mississippi, says, "I'm so used to him travelling I don't know what I'd do if he were here. He's got his dogs, I suppose. But, with him always being away, we don't have time to get into each other's hair."



On the road, at truck stops and diners, we ate Reese's peanut-butter cups; Reese's Pieces; Sour Cream 'n Onion Pringles potato crisps; 3 Musketeers; chicken, baked, simmered, stewed, smothered, potted in pies, or creamed à la king; chicken-fried steak; chicken-fried chicken; chicken even for breakfast sometimes, if we'd travelled all night after a show and never got dinner. Arriving in Columbus, Georgia, after driving since midnight, we had baked chicken at ten in the morning, which was the earliest I had ever eaten chicken in my life. Most often, the Southernaires take their meals at truck stops, which have telephones at the tables and showers for rent and sometimes Southernaires tapes for sale in racks near the cashiers. "Truck stops have beautiful food," Mack once explained to me. "Besides, we can get the bus serviced at the same time we eat."

Now and then when I was with the Southernaires, I felt we spent more time arranging to eat, stopping to eat, ordering food to go, waiting to eat, and eating than we did at gospel shows. The night I began my travels with them, we left Jackson, drove about twelve miles, then pulled off at a truck stop and had dinner. It was a quarter to one in the morning. None of the Southernaires understood why I found this odd. The truck stop was fairly empty, and the nine of us spread out at five or six tables, so when Huey said grace our "Amen"s ping-ponged around the din-

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ing room. When the Southernaires' agent books a date for them, she tries to get the promoter to pay for their hotel and dinner, to supplement the small amount they are paid for the show. Sometimes the promoter offers to cook them dinner instead of underwriting it. In Madison, Georgia, an old man who was a friend of the promoter set up a booth outside the auditorium with paper plates, napkins, an ancient deep fryer, and a Crock-Pot, and started cooking yellow perch and hot dogs for the group to have before the show. When I asked him if the fish was good, he gave me a funny look. Then he slapped a piece of perch across the palm of his hand and said, "Like I said, it don't got no bones."

AT the concerts, I saw men wearing spats and women wearing hats such as I'd never seen before: a black porkpie with a turquoise veil and bow; a midshipman's white cap with little pearls sewn along the rim; a tricorne of orange faille; a green beanie; a purple derby, worn at a slant; a red saucer that had netting looped around the edge and a piece of stiff fabric shaped like a Dorito sticking straight up from the crown; a fuchsia-colored ten-gallon with an ostrich feather drooping from the hatband. The hats were on elderly ladies, who moved through the crowds like cruise ships. Teen-age girls came to the concerts, too, in flowered dresses or in jeans and tank tops, wearing their babies slung on their hips, the way hikers wear fanny packs, or jouncing them absentmindedly, like loose change.

I heard people at gospel concerts call eyeglasses "helpers" and a gravel road "a dirty road," and I heard an infant called "a lap baby," and a gun called "a persuader," and dying called "making it over," and an embarrassed person described as "wanting to swallow his teeth," and a dead person described as someone who was "having his mail delivered to him by groundhogs." Everybody talked about Jesus all the time. He was called a doctor, a lawyer, a lily of the valley, a lamb, a shepherd, joy in the morning, a rock, a road, peace in the evening, a builder, a captain, a rose of Sharon, a friend, a father, and someone who is always on time. I met a man named Porkchop and a man named Midget and a little boy named Royriquez Clarencezellus Wooten. I heard other gospel groups perform: the Christian Harmonizers and the Sensational Harmonizers and the Harmonettes and the Religiousettes and the Gloryettes and the Gospel True Lights and the True Gospel Singers and the Brotherhood Gospel Singers and the Five Singing Sons and the Mighty Sons of Glory and the Fantastic Disciples and the Fantastic Soulernaires and the Fantastic Violinaires and the Sunset Jubilaires and the Pilgrim Jubilees and the Brown Boys and the Five Blind Boys and Wonder Boy and the Spiritual Voices. The concerts were like big public conversations. The exhortations that people called out to the singers most often were "Take your time!" and "Let Him *use* you!" The exhortations that Huey and Roger called out most often were "Do you believe in Jesus?" and "Can I get just one witness?" and "Are you with me, church?" and "You know, God is *able.*"

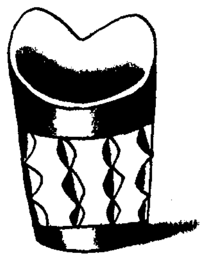
In Madison, Georgia, the Southernaires performed as part of a program given in a school auditorium. As soon as the concert began, a tiny woman in a peach-colored pants suit got up from her seat and made her way over to the aisle, and then she spiralled around for about an hour, gasping "Thank you, Jesus! Thank you, Jesus!" with her eyes squeezed shut and her hands flapping in the air. People stepped around her carefully when they went to and from their seats. On the stage, a local group was performing, and one of the singers had raised her arms and turned her palms toward her face as she sang; she had six fingers on each hand, and each nail was painted coral pink. After the song, she leaned over the edge of the stage and said sharply, "Isn't Satan busy? Satan's a stubborn old mule. I remember when I would lay out all night on what they call the disco floor. Then something hit me in the head. The voice I heard, it was just like threading a needle." I saw only one white person besides myself at one concert—she was the desk clerk at the motel where we were staying, and Huey told her if she gave us good rooms he'd give her a free ticket. Huey introduced me to the audience one night, and afterward someone passed me a note that said, "We Welcome You, To Madison, Georgia. From: Hattie." I read it and looked up, and the woman who had written it fluttered her handkerchief at me, and during the next song she crossed the room and kissed me.

MARIANNA, FLORIDA: We arrive at four-thirty in the morning, after driving all night. Granard will try to negotiate a half-day rate at a motel, since we will sleep for only a few hours and then will leave to set up the show, and after the show we'll get back on the bus and start driving to McCormick, South Carolina, for the next show. Even for a gospel group as well established as the Southernaires, every dollar makes a difference. One night, I found a scrap of paper on the bus on which someone had been doing calculations. It said, "Show, $1500. Records $232." When all was said and done, that appeared to be all they would make that evening, and they had to pay for their food and gas and lodging and split the remainder eight ways. The motels we drive by and consider around Marianna are squat, cinder-block buildings on weedy lots. At the first one we try, the night manager comes out and looks at the bus and then he tells Granard the motel is totally booked, even though the parking lot is empty. We stop at another motel, and Granard negotiates for ten minutes, until the clerk gives him a hospitable price. Mack pulls the bus behind the motel, where the parking lot turns into dirt and saw grass. My motel room is stale and dreary. There is a shopping program and a white gospel show on television, and a lizard, paralyzed but pulsating, on one corner of my door.

The next afternoon, the air is completely still. The street leading to Marianna High School is lined with palm trees, and not a frond is moving. The school is a pretty building with Mediterranean inclinations. Its walls are apricot brick. The lawns around it have been roasted. Some little blond girls are playing kickball in front of a bungalow next to the school. A few yards away, a group of old black men wearing short-sleeved white dress shirts and creased fedoras, their pants hiked up to their diaphragms, are standing and talking. When they see the bus, they hitch their pants up even higher and start trotting toward it, waving us around to the side of the school. Mack pulls up to a loading dock and yanks the gears until the bus wheezes and settles down.

Huey stands and stretches, half bent: he is too tall to unfold himself fully in the bus. He nudges Roger, who is listening to his Walkman, and then wipes his forehead, peers out, and says hoarsely, "I always do love Florida."

Through the loading-dock door comes Sister Lula Cheese Vann. She is a husky woman with the haughty bearing of a big shot. She is dressed in a salmon-colored luncheon suit, a dozen rings and pins and bracelets, and a structurally complex salmon-colored hat the size of a breadbox. In her right hand is a flyer for the evening's program. In her left is a quiver of paper fans, which are printed with an essay entitled "How to Get Along with People," and are sponsored by her full-time business, the Vann Funeral Home. By vocation, Sister Vann is a mortician; as an avocation she promotes gospel. She comes to the open door of the bus and says smartly, "Southernaires. Hello. Do you know who I am?"



Huey steps out and says "Sister *Vann*," in his most sultry voice, and shakes her hand. Sister Vann melts a little. The old men form a buzzy circle around them, giving orders and gesturing. Gary and Melvin step out, wearing work gloves, jeans, and T-shirts, and start shoving the equipment out of the belly of the bus. Mack is dragging the record crates up the ramp of the loading dock.

The hall of the school is cool and clattery. The front door is propped half open; a wedge of yellow late-afternoon light, of parched lawn, of palms, of shuttered bungalows, of tar-drizzled sidewalk, of little blond girls wandering by is showing through. The hall begins to fill. Mack, setting up the cassette table, is clowning with two young girls in fancy dresses. A brassy-voiced woman walks past them, hauling her teen-age daughter by the elbow. "I would like Sister Vann to give her a listen," the woman says to Mack. "Put her on the program. Yes, I would." Brother Alonzo Keys, a handsome chatterbox from Panama City, Florida, who is singing tonight, comes over to pay his respects to Huey and the Southernaires. Sister Gladys Madrick, who will open the gospel program, flounces by, trailed by three skittery young women in lavender dresses. The auditorium is medium-sized and tidy, with smooth gold seats and purple fittings. Three women are already seated, halfway back, and are flapping at one another with Sister Vann's fans.

By seven, Melvin has finished the sound check, so the Southernaires go back to the bus and change into the clothes they will wear for the hour or so before they change into the evening's uniforms—whichever of their six sets Granard has chosen. Melvin has put on a mustard-colored blazer, a mustard shirt, and a black tie. Huey is wearing a turquoise tunic. The last sunlight has deepened and now fades. The neighborhood is dead quiet and dim, except right here, in this little pocket, which is full of noise and commotion, with the school lights flaring, and someone in the auditorium already yelling, and Sister Gladys Madrick's organist starting to play.

THE uniform that Granard chooses is the black double-breasted suit that they wear with a crisp white shirt, a tie with a purplish gardenia print, and smooth black shoes. Onstage in this uniform, they look polished, natty, and a little grave. Sister Vann introduces them: "I feel blessed. I never, never thought I'd get the Jackson Southernaires here in Marianna, and here they are. The Lord's been good to me." She pauses. "Now, before I start with the Southernaires I want to say to you-all that we got to stop this screaming and *crying* about the price of these tickets. This program costs seven dollars a ticket, and I can tell you, with God as my witness, that this is the cheapest the Jackson Southernaires have ever been anywhere they've gone. So give God a hand, would you, and quit this miserable complaining!" A smattering of applause. Sister Vann smiles wanly. Her funeral-home motto is "Concern for the Living, Reverence for the Dead." "I am so glad to be following in God's footsteps," she says. "And I'm glad God put love in my heart and I don't mind sharing it. Now, Marianna, the Jackson *Southernaires!!*"

Maurice taps the drum, and they begin. Each program opens with Roger singing "I've Been Changed." It's a song with a clunky, unlovely beat, but it always rouses the crowd. Singing it, Roger is coiled and ferocious. The auditorium is mostly full now, and the audience is clapping in time. When Roger finishes the song, he steps to one side, and Huey comes forward. "Say 'Amen,' Marianna," he says.

"Amen!"

"Say 'Amen' *again*." Huey flicks the microphone upward, looks forward, and then snaps the microphone to the right and his head the other way. It is a tiny gesture, but vivid—as if he has stolen a look at something and then torn himself away.

"Amen."

"Sing it, Huey. Sing it! Sing it!"

The woman next to me leans over and whispers, "Oh Lord, we got a loud one here."

"Let me ask you something," Huey says, stepping forward. "How many of you here know there is a heaven?"

"A-*men*."

Huey gives his testimony, about the night his house burned to the ground. It is a terrible true story: he lost everything he had, and his son could have died if Huey had not stumbled on him as the family was getting away. Around me, people are nodding and weeping. I have now heard Huey tell this many times—to me in private, and also at several shows—but each time the clenched and anguished look on his face seems fresh. After the story, he always sings "He Will Make a Way," which begins as a sweet, slow, melancholic exchange between singer and chorus, and then rises into a storm. In the last verse, Huey is shouting that God will make a way, that he always makes a way, and then he can't speak anymore, and he starts laughing, and sweat is running down his cheeks, and he turns his eyes upward, and he stares up past the auditorium ceiling, and tears stream down his face.

Huey steps back, exhausted, and Maurice starts the rattling drumbeat for "No Coward Soldier." Roger will take over until the end of the show. He bounds to the edge of the stage and starts singing. The woman next to me, who had taken my hand and held it through most of the show, now releases it gently, as if she were putting a hooked fish back in the water, and turns to me and says, "I'm sorry, baby, but I got to get *loose*." Then she jumps out into the aisle and bends forward from her waist and snaps in a staccato rhythm back and forth as Roger sings.

At that point, I get up and work my way along the row and across the far aisle and stand in the doorway by the side of the stage. It is almost midnight. Someone is frying catfish out front, and the peppery smell thickens the air. Someone with a wheezy cough is standing behind me. A big bug smacks into me, sizzles, and falls. I can see everything from where I am standing: a man in the front row pitched back in his seat and crying without making any noise; twin teen-agers in dotted sundresses fanning themselves a few rows behind him; Mack, at the back of the auditorium, sitting on the gray plastic crates that hold the group's records and tapes; a diapered baby in a sailor suit, draped over the shoulder of a slim woman in a yellow sheath; a woman, too wide to sit in an auditorium seat, teetering on a folding chair someone put out for her near the exit door; Roger, on the lip of the stage, taking little explosive bounces on the balls of his feet; Huey, behind him, leaning against the electric piano and running his hand over his hair, his expression a mingling of rapture, fatigue, and distraction, a sort of stillness absorbing him, as if he were in a different, quieter place; a banner over the stage showing the Marianna High School Fighting Bulldog mascot dressed in a snug purple crewneck; a toddler; a wheelchair; a tossed-away flyer; a flash of white in the crowd each time a woman flaps her handkerchief or a man raises his to dab his face—a flash as incandescent as a lit bulb or the luminous envelope of a flame.

Roger jumps off the stage and hollers, "What day did you get the Holy Ghost? Did you get it on a Monday? On a Tuesday? On a Wednesday? Did someone here get it on a Thursday?" One by one, people rise up like bubbles and float toward the stage, grab his hand, shake it hard, and then spin and dance away. He calls for anyone who got the Holy Ghost on Sunday; he sings that God don't need no coward soldiers. He shouts that he wishes he had a witness. He says he knows some people here tonight are going through something. He claps his left hand to his head and then whips it down and pounds his chest. The night is ending. The Southernaires' time is nearly over. They will be back on the bus and on the road to Jackson within the hour. The music is roaring. A little breeze is picking up outside, lifting bits of grass and gravel and blowing them away. Roger stamps his foot and screams, "*We will surely meet again someday!*" ♦

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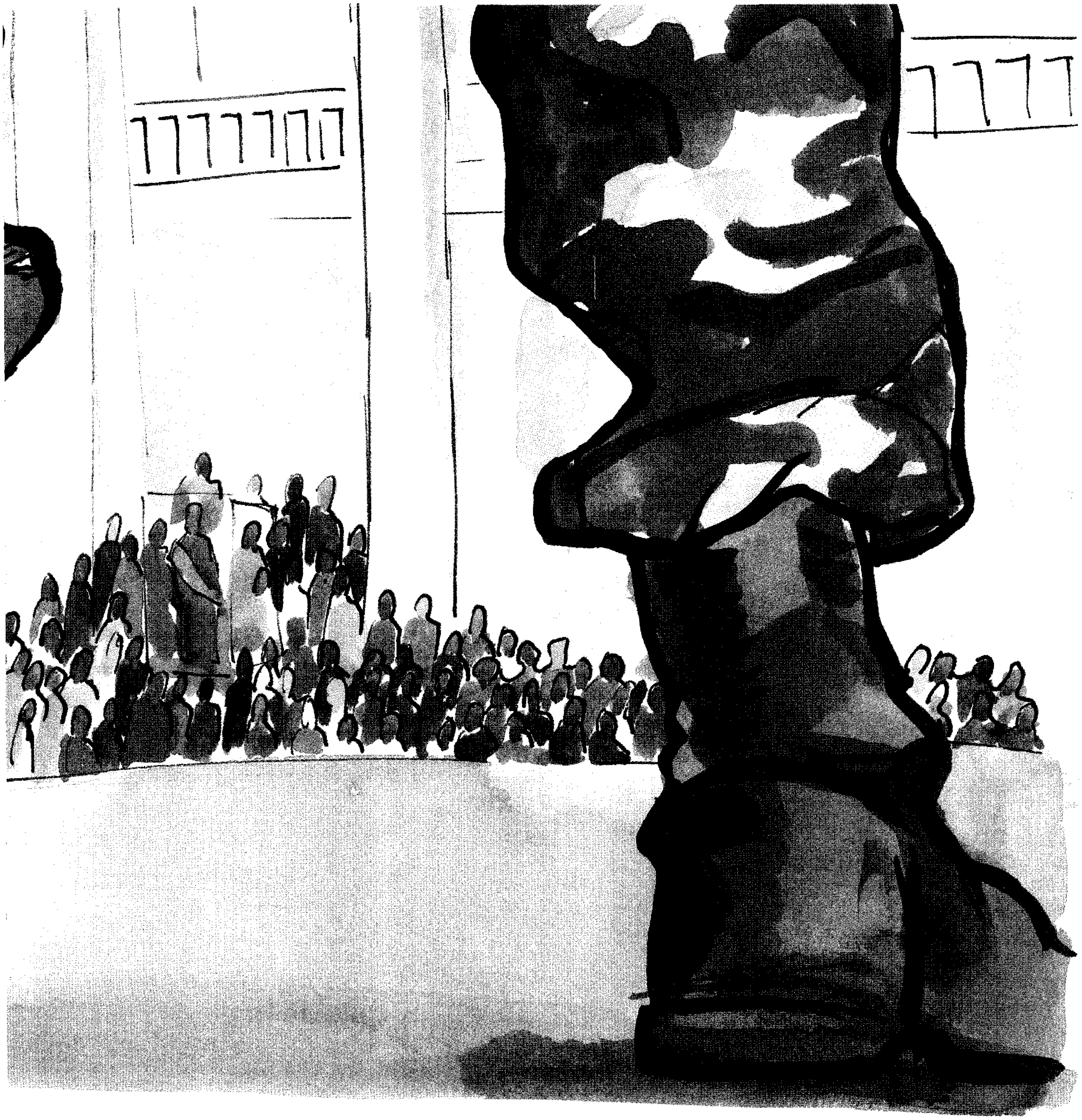
A REPORTER AT LARGE

THE SIEGE OF MIREBALAIS

When the nine men of Captain Carroll's Special Forces A-Team, a.k.a. the Green Berets, landed in Haiti, they found themselves deployed as a sort of armed Peace Corps—a role for which they were understaffed, underfunded, and underequipped. Then Washington got the idea that its men were under attack.

BY TRACY KIDDER



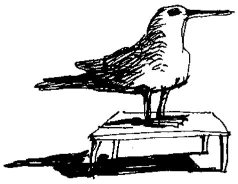
EVA CHRYSANTHE

ON October 20, 1994, Captain Jonathan Carroll stood, dressed in battle gear, before what he took to be the entire village of Coudgoye, in the central plateau of Haiti. Many of the hundreds in the crowd were very thin and raggedly clothed. They had assembled around that rare thing in Haiti—a large tree—in order to welcome the American Captain to their town and to tell him what they needed, indeed expected from him. The crowd spoke to him in Creole, through an interpreter, many voices raised at once, many arms waving. They wanted the Captain to build them a new school and provide schoolbooks and pay the teachers' salaries; to construct a better road than the rutted dirt track that now connected their village to the district's main road, which was itself made of dirt and turned into mudholes and ravines every few hundred feet; to repair their dam and irrigation system; to bring them electricity. And surely, some in the crowd thought, the Captain would arrest their former oppressors, the Macoutes, the local representatives of Haiti's previous, despised regime.

It was easy for the townsfolk to believe that the Captain could do all that. After all, he represented the most powerful nation on earth. He looked the part. He is about six feet tall, trim and fit, with short sandy-brown hair and a strong jaw. He looked like the all-

American soldier, dressed in the green camouflage battle-dress uniform, his pistol in a shoulder holster, a wad of Skol erasing the fold between his lower lip and chin. The Captain grew up in Rainbow City, Alabama. His voice caresses and elongates words. He often pauses while speaking, in order to expel tobacco juice and to think. He makes his thinking visible. But he is not laconic. Captain Carroll spoke to the town of Coudgoye for about an hour.

He was a soldier, he told them. Just a soldier. His commanders had ordered him to secure the peace above all, and to do so without taking sides. He would ask his commanders to send people who had the expertise and resources to help them with their school and dam and all the rest, but he could not make them any promises. He didn't have the men, money, or supplies to do those jobs himself. But, the Captain said, he and his men would try to help the people of Coudgoye help themselves. They must get their town council functioning again and use it to come up with solutions. There were many things that they could do for starters, if they got organized and all pitched in: build a new market, do some road repairs, set up a community-watch program.



It was hard for Captain Carroll to read the crowd's response, since he was a stranger and didn't speak Creole. No one seemed inclined to threaten him, but he read disappointment in many of the faces. The Captain often described himself as "a redneck" and "a political conservative." After the meeting in Coudgoye, he wrote in his journal, "They expect Americans to do everything for them. . . . They don't understand our mission. They want us to start handing them everything." He had a saying: "I'll teach someone to fish, but I'm not gonna give them all the fish *I* catch." But he wished that he had more men and money and equipment to help these people get started. The Captain had never before seen poverty like Haiti's, and it appalled him. "I see the children. That's what gets to me," he often said. He'd seen many barefoot children, begging, dressed in rags, with the orangeish hair that his medics told him was a sign of malnutrition. He wanted to help. It was an earnest desire, in part religious. He often read the Bible at night, and in his journal chastised himself for not getting regularly to church. Perhaps it was also the desire of a young man who had passed many difficult tests to become the commander of an Army Special Forces A-Team and wasn't used to failure.

The Captain had taken command of his team about a year earlier. He and his men had all been trained in many skills besides martial ones—expensively trained, at a cost roughly equivalent to four years of Harvard and a year of graduate school. But they'd seen themselves mainly as warriors. One of their jobs was supposed to be training other soldiers, in North Africa. All of them had gone through six months of schooling in Arabic, and had studied up on the region, but they hadn't gone there yet. Only a couple of months ago, they'd been out at sea performing MAROPS, mastering techniques of waterborne infiltration and exfiltration. They'd been jumping into the water from helicopters and climbing back in, launching and landing rubber boats off and back onto beaches and Navy ships, and generally having a good time. Rumors of an invasion of Haiti were thick back then. One of the team recalled, "We were hoping we might be in the spearhead of a forced entry."

Captain Carroll had joined the Special Forces for just that sort of mission, after serving in a staff position in Artillery. "I get bored easily," he explained. "That's why I joined the Army in the first place. I've gotta try something different, do different things. Plus I just *love* to blow things up. Shoot big guns. There aren't many places you can do that and get paid for it, legally." All the members of the team had signed up for the Special Forces in anticipation of doing what they called "high-speed stuff." What they encountered in Haiti was altogether different.

"It's incredible," Captain Carroll said to me in Haiti last December. "We're trained in all this unconventional warfare. I can set up a *beautiful* ambush. We can set up all this satellite communications. But no one *ever* trained me to be a prosecutor or a j*uh*dge." Nevertheless, for most of six months Captain Carroll's government required him and his men to serve in practically every capacity imaginable within the large and broken-down chunk of rural Haiti known as the Mirebalais district. The Captain was only twenty-nine.

OPERATION UPHOLD DEMOCRACY, the second American military occupation of Haiti in this century, began last September. It looked like a righteous and straightforward mission: to restore to office the overwhelmingly popular and democratically elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide, and to strip away power from the illegal Cédras regime, which had ruled Haiti with notorious cruelty for three years. When the operation officially ended, on March 31st, and the United Nations took over, some prominent Haitians deemed the campaign a mitigated failure. Aristide had been restored to power, and Haiti was no longer ruled by terror, at least for the time being. But the country remained an environmentally devastated land where a very few lived in luxury and most of the rest in excruciating poverty. It still had an infrastructure unworthy of the name and a system of justice that was marginal at best. Violence in Haiti did not approach the level in, say, Washington, D.C. But even though many weapons had been confiscated, political factions remained armed, and crime and violence appeared to be increasing.

Those results were not surprising. From the start, the White House had stated that the American forces would not perform "nation-building." Washington's fear that the mission might turn into another Somalia-like campaign, long and weary and beset with American casualties, hampered many parts of the operation, such as attempts to disarm the populace. Given its ambiguous attitude toward Aristide, who had, after all, once declared capitalism to be a "capital sin," Washington was not about to take all power away from all the friends and members of the Cédras regime. And the deal that Jimmy Carter cut with General Cédras, only hours before the planned invasion, left little time for orchestrating what had suddenly become a peaceful occupation.

Twenty thousand American troops occupied Haiti initially. But the vast majority remained in the cities of Port-au-Prince and Cap-Haïtien. A mere twelve hundred United States Army Special Forces soldiers, organized in little teams, spread out across the rest of the country. These twelve hundred Special Forces soldiers were supposed to create "a secure and stable environment" for some *five million* Haitians. Captain Carroll's Operational Detachment A-Team 323—they referred to themselves as "Three-Two-Three"—consisted of only nine men. They were given responsibility for a thousand square kilometres of Haiti's central plateau, an area that contained about a hundred and fifty thousand people, scattered among about a hundred towns and villages, many reachable only by horse. And there was no functioning government when 323 arrived; the legitimate officials were only beginning to come out of hiding.

Like the members of all the forty-nine Special Forces A-Teams deployed during Operation Uphold Democracy, the nine men of 323 were supposed to keep the peace without becoming policemen themselves. They were supposed to help Haitian Army soldiers do that job until a new Haitian police force could be formed. The plan made a certain sense. But many Haitian soldiers were strikingly undisciplined. The Haitian Army, which the United States created earlier in this century, had long served as the main instrument of dictatorial oppression. Many had behaved like thugs during the Cédras years. And most of the citizenry loathed them.

Every S.F. team also received instructions to cultivate in its district "the democratic principle of a nonviolent loyal opposition." But the group chosen to fill that role, the group that the soldiers were supposed to support, along with Artistide's Lavalas Party, was, of all things, the notorious FRAPH (the Front for the Advancement and Progress of Haiti). The leader of this organization was on the C.I.A.'s payroll. The FRAPH was a fairly new group of Macoutes who had practiced such old techniques of social control as extortion and murder. Most citizens hated them, too.

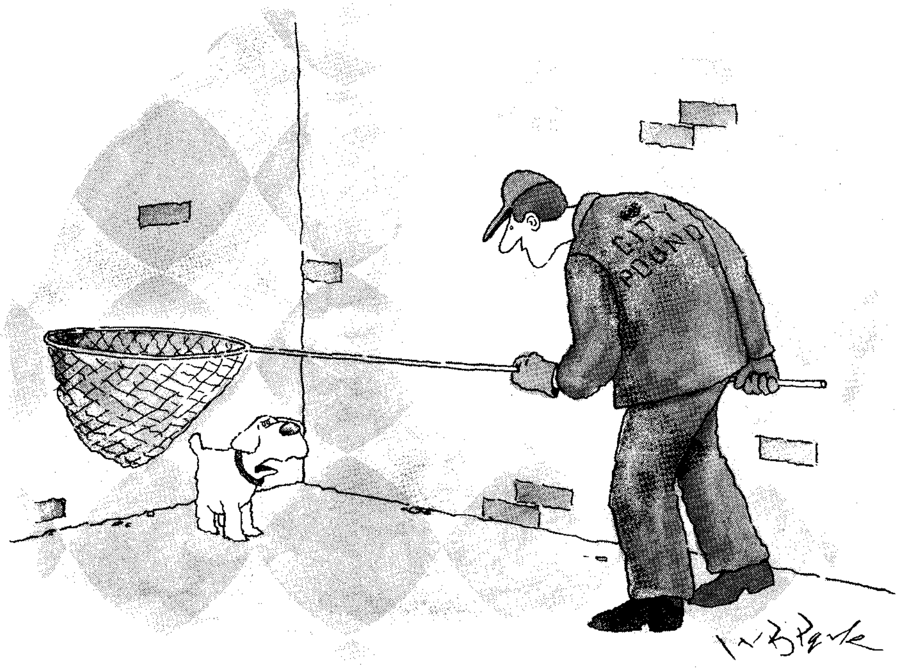
The S.F. teams had other, more general handicaps. 323's situation was typical. Many towns in its district didn't have electricity or potable water or a clinic with medicine or a functioning market or a school with paper for students to write on or navigable roads. As the mission evolved, 323 was told to do what it could about solving some of those problems, about meeting the great expectations that every town shared with the village of Coudgoye. And yet, to attempt civic improvements 323 was allowed almost nothing in the way of extra men or equipment, and very little money.

On top of everything else, the commanders of the 10th Mountain Division, who were in charge of all troops in Haiti, often harassed the Special Forces soldiers about tiny uniform violations. It was as if the generals wanted to show Special Forces soldiers that they weren't so special after all.

Civilians tend to judge soldiers by their missions, to praise them when they serve in successful campaigns and to blame them when campaigns don't turn out as well as expected. But given the circumstances that their government put them in, and the effort that they made, I think that Captain Carroll and his men deserve at least a little praise.

THE Special Forces were the only part of the American military that could have attempted all that was asked of them in Haiti, the only group that could conceivably have worked as soldiers and diplomats, governors and plumbers. The Special Forces are a child not of the New World Order but of the Cold War. They were created in 1952 to conduct guerrilla operations in Europe, in case the Soviet Union took over. John Wayne lionized the S.F. in the movie "The Green Berets," and President Kennedy had been their first powerful champion. He allowed them to wear their berets, against the wishes of the regular Army, and he greatly increased their numbers during Vietnam, where he employed them as a counter-guerrilla force; that is, they were trainers of counter-guerrillas as well as fighters themselves. After Vietnam, the S.F.'s numbers dwindled greatly, then grew again, like all things military, during the Reagan years.

The United States military has long maintained a number of small élite groups, such as the Navy SEALs; the Army Rangers (three highly regimented battalions of light infantry whose main mission is to make "quick strikes," in which, as it's said, they "break things and kill people"); and the secret yet famous Delta Force, which specializes in rescuing hostages and snatching "bad guys." In a world that has become less predictable since the end of the Cold War, élite special-operations units have become in themselves a form of contingency planning for the Pentagon and the White House. The Special Forces, which number about ten thousand, are the largest and most versatile group in the Special Operations Command. They have become very busy lately, busier than ever



"Before this goes any further, I'd like to see some identification."

before. In fiscal 1994, S.F. soldiers, some in teams of only two and three, were invited into a hundred and eight different countries—more than half of the world.

S.F. teams are good at such post-Cold War missions as the coördination of operational planning among multinational forces. Many of the jobs that they have done in recent years aren't all that different from what they did in Vietnam and under Reagan: strictly military missions, as in Desert Storm, and counter-narcotics missions, and humanitarian missions with a military cast, such as the current "de-mining" project in Cambodia. Mainly, the teams work, in the words of one S.F. sergeant, as "over-trained, underpaid teachers," and what they usually teach are the arts of war, to foreign governments' armies. The setting isn't usually hostile, as it was in Vietnam, but missions don't always yield peaceful results. One S.F. veteran told me this story: "We went into Sierra Leone to support the government and spent about two and a half months. We taught their military Code of Conduct, Geneva Convention, and tactics. . . . Two months later, the military overthrew the government. Obviously, what we did must have been pretty effective. Of course, that wasn't what we went there to accomplish."

The Special Forces are all male. To apply, a soldier must score high on Army intelligence tests and be about to attain the rank of sergeant or captain. He must go through Jump School and pass a harrowing three-week test of psychological and physical endurance. Actual training, which is itself another admissions test, consists of four months of small-unit tactics and instruction in specialties, and more than that for the medics, who emerge halfway to being doctors. All who pass go on to language school and some from there to further formal training, and the members of A-Teams also train each other in their specialties.

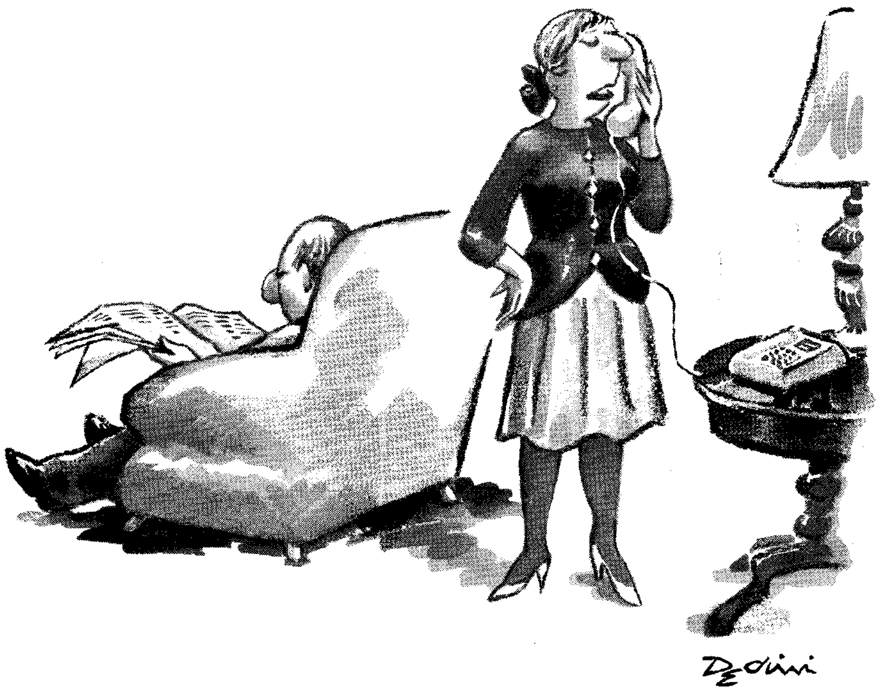
The A-Team is the basic S.F. unit, and in theory a team such as 323 can train a thousand foreign soldiers. It is a collective Odysseus, skilled in all ways of contending. But 323, like most A-Teams, was one-third understrength. Under the captain and team sergeant (there should have been a warrant officer as well), 323 had one engineer (they should have had two), two communications specialists, two weapons specialists, and two medics, one of whom doubled as the team's intelligence expert. Most of the men in 323 made only schoolteachers' pay, about twenty-five thousand dollars a year—the Captain made about thirty-five thousand dollars. Almost half the team had gone through divorces. Many had been away from home for two of the last three years.

Staff Sergeant Bryan Proctor was 323's engineer and resident road boss. On the morning of December 12th, I rode with him through Mirebalais, a town of about twelve thousand, with dirt side streets and open sewers and tin-roofed one-story houses made of wood and concrete. The streets were crowded with goats and chickens and mules and scrawny dogs, children shod and barefoot, women carrying bundles on their heads, men stroking fighting cocks cradled in their arms, beggars as gnarled as the sticks they leaned on. Many people waved to Proctor, and he waved back, explaining, "Around here, I feel like a mayor in a parade."

For about a month after the team had arrived in Mirebalais, in October, 323 had collaborated with another A-Team, which had arrived ten days earlier and had just started road repairs. There were tight restrictions on what they could do or spend for civic projects. They justified the use of their own labor and operations-fund money on the grounds that the roads were nearly impassable, even by Humvee, and that they couldn't keep the peace if they couldn't travel. They had gathered a crew of local volunteers to work with hoes and shovels. (The only thing that they could give the volunteers was food, and even that was more than they were authorized to do.) Meanwhile, Proctor and the engineers from the other A-Team had helped to repair a collection of derelict heavy equipment that belonged to the local public-works department. After the other A-Team left, Proctor had carried on with the roadwork. But the heavy equipment had begun breaking down again. The last of it, a dump truck, he told me, had expired the day before.

When Proctor drove the Humvee through the gate into the Mirebalais public-works motor pool, I had the impression that we had entered a junk yard. The place was full of half-dismantled, battered yellow heavy equipment. "Yeah," Proctor said. "It's Robinson Crusoe, everything you do around here. No doubt."

About a dozen men were standing around inside the yard. All of them wanted to talk to Proctor. He is a little



"Oh, filled with hopeless longing. And you?"

A HALL

The road led straight to the temple.
Notre Dame, though not Gothic at all.
The huge doors were closed. I chose one on the side,
Not to the main building—to its left wing,
The one in green copper, worn into gaps below.
I pushed. Then it was revealed:
An astonishingly large hall, in warm light.
Great statues of sitting women—goddesses,
In draped robes, marked it with a rhythm.
Color embraced me like the interior of a purple-brown flower
Of unheard-of size. I walked, liberated
From worries, pangs of conscience, and fears.
I knew I was there as one day I would be.
I woke up serene, thinking that this dream
Answers my question, often asked:
How is it when one passes the last threshold.

—Czeslaw Milosz

(*Translated, from the Polish, by the author and Robert Hass.*)

under six feet tall, sturdily built, with dark hair a little longer than the average soldier's, a mustache, and, when he smiles, rather wild-looking eyes. Encountering other human beings, Proctor smiles from one side of his mouth, cocks his head, lifts his right hand to shoulder height, then swings it in for a handshake. He shook with an old man in a suit, who had a photograph album containing pictures of his children which he wanted Proctor to look at. The old man was superannuated, but Proctor had arranged to have him kept on as caretaker. Proctor has a soft voice. It takes you into his confidence. He filled me in on various characters in the yard: another old man, whose whole job was to handle the key to the gate, and an elderly blind man whom Proctor had insisted on keeping employed—the blind man's job was to turn the fuel-carrier's spigot on and off. Evidently, firing people wasn't one of Proctor's skills. He insisted, though, that there were some fine mechanics here.

One of the mechanics was working on the dump truck, the last of the fleet to have functioned. Its rear axle was propped up on concrete blocks. The rear wheels lay on the ground. Two men stood watching while the mechanic knelt over one of the wheels. He had a hammer in one hand and a cold chisel in the other. He was banging the chisel into one of the lug nuts on the wheel. He was cutting a groove into the lug nut. Evidently, he planned to spin the lug nut off with his hammer and chisel. The men, both the worker and the watchers, looked up as Proctor approached. The mechanic on the ground explained through Proctor's interpreter that he had to take the lug nuts off both wheels, then remove the studs and replace them with the new studs that Proctor had found for them. The interpreter added, "They need the socket wrench."

Proctor pursed his lips, closed his eyes, laid his head to one side, and lifted his hands. "But, see, I *don't have one.*"

The men nodded. The mechanic went back to work with the hammer and chisel. He was the only person in the yard with a job to do. In all, he had twenty lug nuts to remove without a wrench, just to start his repair job. He hadn't got the first one off by the time we left. Driving away, Proctor said, "It really amazes me that they're still trying to keep things together. This whole thing is a giant exercise in futility."

I once mentioned Proctor to a major, who said, "Proctor is . . . an individual." In the Army, this doesn't quite amount to censure, but it isn't high praise. An "individual" in the Army is someone who is usually amusing but has nonconformist tendencies, which are always dangerous. The Special Forces were the only right place in the Army for Proctor. They offered the only duty that took him far enough away from the garrisons to wear a nose ring, for instance, as he did on occasion when he was off duty and out of sight of field-grade officers.

Captain Carroll once said, "No one in the world is a stranger to Proctor." Proctor seemed to know about half the people in Mirebalais, and all the children knew him to be the softest touch among the American soldiers. Thinking about Proctor, Captain Carroll shook his head. "He's constantly giving his own money away."

One morning some weeks back, Proctor found himself wishing fervently that he had given more away. He was walking around town with one of the team when he saw the figure of a boy lying at the edge of a dirt street, near one of the little foul streams that run beside many streets in town. The boy was wrapped in a coarse blanket, and beside him lay half a melon rind, which the boy had used for receiving alms. "I put my foot on his leg and it moved like a piece of wood," Proctor recalled. "I recognized him. He was tall and probably about seventy pounds. It made me think about my dad. Whenever he says grace, he always asks a special blessing for the old and the hungry, and *I* saw the kid the day before and if I would've walked over to him and given him a gourde or two he wouldn't have died in the night. So for about a week I was, like, *shit.* I'll spend thirty gourde on a meal, so to know that two gourde would have gotten him through a day . . ."

Proctor had this to say about Operation Uphold Democracy: "We knew it would be just a bunch of poor people dying in the streets, and it would be nothing but a giant pain in the ass for us. Are we enjoying this? No. But when you get down here and see how hard these people work, and how decent and honest they can be, and the corruption disgusts you, so it's like, well, we're here, and maybe we can make a few changes, and, if so, that's good."

He said, "These people deserve a lot better than they've had. To give 'em a damn road . . ." He let his voice trail off.

That afternoon, Proctor took me for a ride on the road he'd helped to fix, ten kilometres between the towns of Mirebalais and Domond. After three weeks of hard labor back in what he called "our prime," their team of engineers and Haitian volunteers had made it one of the best stretches of rural road in Haiti. They'd cut the travel time on it from an hour and twenty minutes to half an hour. Here and there, we hit new ruts and potholes. They could fix those in no time, Proctor figured, if they could get the heavy equipment rolling again.

I didn't see how he could feel optimistic on that score. It would take more than a mechanic with a hammer and cold chisel, I thought, to put a truck back together. But there is a tenacity that one encounters in Haiti, like a tree sprouting out of the fissure in a rock. Late that afternoon, we stopped back at the public-works yard. The men had all left. But the dump truck that Proctor had found standing on concrete blocks in the morning was back on its wheels, which now had new studs. Proctor stood gazing at the truck for a time, as a child might gaze at the mystery of a model ship in a bottle.

CAPTAIN CARROLL and his men lived in the center of Mirebalais, in the old Haitian Army compound, a collection of angular, flat-roofed buildings, all painted urine yellow. Haitian soldiers, dressed in mismatching khaki uniforms, some carrying antique M1 Garands, stood guard at the gate and loitered around the buildings. They greeted the men of 323 with salutes and stood aside, wearing ingratiating smiles, and it was hard to imagine those Haitian soldiers terrorizing the district, as they had, not long ago.

The team occupied most of the compound's two-story main building, known as the casern. They professed themselves quite cozy there, cozy by comparison with other places around the world where they had camped, such as in empty hangars and under airplane wings. They had their own team TV and VCR, coffee machine, hot plate, and refrigerator, and also a little stray that now was surely the best-fed dog in Mirebalais, whom they had named Shithead—they'd made up a dog tag for him, with his name in Creole. From the open porches upstairs, they had glimpses of the main street and market, and of a barren mountain range. They often went to sleep to sounds that they associated with voodoo ritual, drums and a repetitive music called *raboday,* produced by whistles and drums and a long, wooden Haitian flute. By now, most could manage to sleep through the late-night sounds of livestock, which around 4 A.M. turned into a cacophony of crowing roosters, squealing pigs, braying goats, barking dogs, soon augmented by the church bell, tolling and tolling. When I got there, in December, a small plastic Christmas tree stood next to their hot plate.

On those warm December evenings, they lounged around the second floor of the casern, dressed in shorts and T-shirts or just in shorts, chewing tobacco and talking in a manner that took me back to my own Army days in Vietnam. It was talk full of acronyms and venerable sayings and phrases. The name Jody, for example, still stood for the mythical cuckolder of old Army marching songs. A couple of the team had been victimized by Jodys, as soldiers always have been when away from home. "Yeah," one of the team told me, smiling, "Jody's still alive. He's immortal." But I'd never before met a group of soldiers as adult as these. They were old by military standards—the youngest twenty-six, the eldest forty. They had lived in close quarters off and on for a year and a half, and for two solid months in Haiti, and civility still prevailed among them. When the Captain and Team Sergeant issued orders, 323 obeyed. But, unlike conventional military units, the team was usually ruled by discussion, not by fiat. In domestic matters, they practiced a rough equality. Forman, the veteran Team Sergeant, the Captain's elder by almost a decade, took the greatest liberties. Sometimes Forman would be lying down on his cot, and ask the Captain to come and talk to *him,* and the Captain would smile and say, "Yes, Bwana." Forman, who told me once that he "used to be forceful," would wake the Captain up by kicking his cot and barking at him like a drill sergeant, all the while addressing him as "sir." Forman had the only private room.

They teased one another rather gently, for soldiers, and didn't spare the Captain. They told him he slept more soundly than a teen-ager, and scoffed openly at his morning irritability, saying to one another in front of him, "He has the ass. He hasn't had his coffee yet." It could be hard to be the only officer, and a reader of the Bible, among a bunch of sergeants. When they wanted to get rid of him for a while, the sergeants would put a porno movie into the team VCR downstairs. That never failed to send the Captain back to his cot. Lately, he'd spent a lot of time there, studying the Haitian Constitution. Many of the team had pinned magazine pictures of nude women to the old and dirty white plaster walls by their cots. Some had quite spectacular collections—regular galleries of breasts and genitalia. On the walls by Captain Carroll's cot hung a Christmas stocking, a collection of greeting cards he'd received from home, and a pencil drawing of Jesus which one of their Haitian interpreters had given him.

The sergeants liked their captain on the whole, most very much, a few, of course, with reservations. They were grateful that he never tried to lay his own religious views on them. Forman, the Team Sergeant, said, "The Captain's a good man. I try to keep him in line. He has a tendency to try to do too much. Plus, I like to fuck with him a lot, too." Staff Sergeant Tony Minor, one of the Captain's chief tormentors, told me, "The Captain's all right. He sometimes goes out to team dinners back at Bragg, and he listens to rock and roll. He's real smart, but we're still waiting to see him in close quarters. But he's a real good guy. He's real good-hearted." And the sergeant most critical of the Captain allowed that he had felt sorry for him sometimes during this deployment in Haiti, because the Captain seemed to take all their setbacks too much to heart.

BACK in October, evidence of corruption—among the Haitian soldiers, in the government, even in schools and churches and missions—had made the Captain angry enough to shout about it in front of his men. By December, he seemed merely sad. "To me, that's the most serious problem in Haiti, the corruption," he told me. "And I don't know how to stop it." But he had removed two judges, and reports of extortion and bribery had decreased since.

The men of 323 had spent a lot of time and effort trying to turn the Haitian soldiers into serviceable police, and to distribute some of them to the outlying towns. The results were mixed at best, but at least those soldiers weren't abusing citizens anymore, and cases of

"If you put me in your novel, could you give me hair?"

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citizens attacking Haitian soldiers, once fairly frequent, had abated. But people with problems for the police still brought them to 323.

At all hours of the day and well into the evenings, Captain Carroll stood outside the casern, receiving visitors: the Mayor of Mirebalais, the high-school principal, the latest commander of the Haitian soldiers, the fully honest judge, and the judge who had suggested just the other day that the Americans buy him a better car, to lend him more prestige. ("Yeah, right," the Captain wrote in his journal afterward.) Captain Carroll looked very large beside most of his Haitian visitors, and would stoop his shoulders slightly, trying, I think, to be polite by seeming smaller, as he listened through an interpreter to citizens who wanted jobs, which he could not provide, and citizens who wanted him to straighten out convoluted land disputes for which there were no records.

The team had taken control of the Haitian soldiers' guns, at least those that were still in the compound when 323 arrived. Following orders that originated with the Aristide government, they had fired all the notorious, hated rural sheriffs called "section chiefs"—those who hadn't gone into hiding—and had taken their weapons, too. The Captain said that he knew there were still "a lot of guns out there." But their searches for weapons, though regular, had been fruitless. At one point, they'd barged into thirty different houses and found no guns—something the Captain swore he'd never do again without good evidence.

Every day, the team scattered, travelling in pairs, lurching in their four-wheel-drive Humvees along the rutted roads to deliver school supplies to Boucan Carré, attend town-council meetings in Gascogne, investigate the latest house burnings in Saut d'Eau, and, while up there, inspect that town's broken generator. They rode rented Haitian horses to the remotest villages, up paths worn so deep that the soldiers' feet would scrape the ground on either side. Two of Captain Carroll's men had crossed the Artibonite River in a dugout canoe, heading for the Dupont region, to identify Dupont's urgent problems and add those to the lists of problems that they were compiling, in the expectation—by December, only the hope—that relief-agency workers would soon arrive in force and get to work. Meanwhile, they had paid for pipe and parts to repair the water system in Mirebalais, and on one occasion they had sent a pregnant woman on a helicopter to the Army field hospital in Port-au-Prince—for a C-section, which saved her life and the baby's. Afterward, the Captain was told to get prior approval before doing something like that again. "Sorry," he said, recalling the incident. "Sorry we saved the woman's life."

In December, on the other hand, the Captain exulted in his journal:

> Went to Coudgoye to inaugurate market. They did it all by themselves (with some ideas and prodding from us). Council and community made it happen. They finally understand that they must help themselves before I start helping them. I just hope I can make it spread throughout the district.

As he had, in effect, been ordered to do, the Captain had arranged "reconciliation" meetings between members of the pro-Aristide Lavalas Party and of the FRAPH, who were delighted to be considered legitimate instead of being thrown in jail. 323 knew about the FRAPH's reputation as violent oppressors but found it possible to like some of the FRAPH, largely, no doubt, because they had not been around to see them committing crimes. The team had come in time only for the reprisals, crowds beating up Haitian soldiers and burning down houses of FRAPH members. There was one notable exception to that pattern. In early November, Minor and another sergeant fished a body out of the river. When Minor first saw it, he said, "Maybe the head's tucked up under the shoulders." Then he said, "Uh-oh."

The decapitated corpse had been Cadet Damzal, the pro-Aristide assistant mayor of Mirebalais, an admirable man, in Captain Carroll's estimation—competent, hardworking, honest, and brave. He had helped the A-Teams get the Mirebalais town council going again, and perhaps he had begun to investigate corruption in the district. That was one of the Special Forces soldiers' theories, among many. Rumors filtered in, and they brought in several suspects for questioning, among them a former section chief with an evil reputation named Nerva Juste. But all the suspects had alibis. The Special Forces soldiers couldn't find any physical evidence. If there were any witnesses, none came forward. They let the suspects go. About a month later, the case was still unresolved, but one of the conspirators had begun to talk, and the Juge d'Instruction had issued warrants for five suspects. The team couldn't find the Macoute section chief Nerva Juste; he had gone into hiding. But the other suspects now languished in the jail, just across the compound, a few hundred feet away from 323's quarters upstairs in the casern.

The only access to justice which most people in the district had ever known came through the strength of crowds. And crowds could turn wild—like the one that 323 had waded into just in time to save a house burglar from being beaten to death, or the crowds that had gathered to beat the suspects in the assistant mayor's murder. But even back in the more violent days of October their district had not seen a great deal of bloodshed—certainly nothing commensurate with the three previous years, under Cédras. The team could hardly claim to have everything running smoothly in its district, but by the end of the year the district was unquestionably pacified.

The Captain and some of the men sat on the back veranda of the casern. "*One* murder in Mirebalais in the last two months," one of the sergeants said.

"And there've probably been half a dozen in Fayetteville."

"It's funny to feel safer here than in your own neighborhood."

"Of course, you don't walk around with a nine millimetre in your own neighborhood," said Captain Carroll.

"Probably be safer if you did," said Team Sergeant Forman.

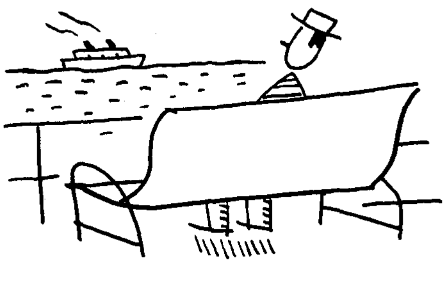
LATE on a Monday afternoon in mid-December, the Captain received a delegation of doctors, four Haitians and a white American named Paul Farmer. Farmer had never met the Captain, but he had a warning and an argument for him.

Farmer had short, dark receding hair. He had delicate-looking hands, and he was thin. He looked pale beside the tan, robust, strong-faced Captain, whose chin was, as usual, enlarged with a wad of chewing tobacco. But Farmer was a much more formidable personage than the Captain knew—a graduate of Harvard Medical School, with a Ph.D. in anthropology from Harvard, and, though only in his mid-thirties, a recent recipient of a MacArthur Foundation "genius grant." A huge number of philanthropic organizations have involved themselves in Haiti's troubles. Many have attempted to impose their own solutions, and rarely if ever in human history has so much been spent to accomplish so little. Farmer practiced small-scale, unquestionably effective philanthropy. He worked five months of the year as a doctor and teacher in Boston—just camping out there, in a room in a rectory—in order to earn enough to work for free the rest of the year in a clinic north of Mirebalais. Haiti was Farmer's adopted home. He did not think of himself as ministering to the Poor, but to impoverished compatriots whom he admired and loved.

Farmer had written two books, each in part a denunciation of America's past involvement in Haitian affairs, most notably America's habit of propping up dictators. Farmer approved of the current occupation, because it had lifted the terror, but he was worried. He had heard, for instance, that this Captain Carroll had been seen in the company of a local member of FRAPH. The way the soldiers had handled the murder of the pro-Aristide assistant mayor also troubled Farmer. Everyone in the district believed that the evil Macoute section chief was the killer. The fact that the American soldiers had let him go made Farmer's Haitian friends wonder if the American soldiers weren't really on the side of the Macoutes. It made Farmer wonder, too. At the very least, he felt, the American soldiers had blundered.

They stood in front of the yellow casern, and Farmer, all amenities exchanged, his eyes fixed on the Captain, asked, "Who cut off the head of the assistant mayor?"

Captain Carroll looked sharply at Farmer. "I don't know," he said. He was not about to offer information just like that, when he didn't know this guy.



Farmer looked at him squarely. "It's very hard to live in Haiti and not know who cut off someone's head. These men could tell you." Farmer gestured toward the Haitian doctors, who stood behind him.

The Captain turned to them. "You mean Nerva Juste?"

The Haitian doctors nodded, murmuring assent.

The Captain looked back at Farmer, warily, I thought. "I arrested him once. We never found an eyewitness, so I had to let him go. Then he ran. From what I'm told, the judge now has a person who was there."

The Captain and the doctor faced each other, the music from town rising as the light faded. As they continued to talk, I had the feeling they were circling each other, like two young men who don't really want to fight.

The Captain said, "I've already fired two judges. I'm willing to try to make the system work."

"I think that arresting the assistant mayor's killer would go a long way toward showing people that," Farmer said. He stared at the Captain's face.

In Farmer's view, Captain Carroll should have kept the section chief in jail, with or without evidence. It was absurd for the Captain to apply principles of American constitutional law in these circumstances. The former section chief was a menace, and this country was far from observing due process yet.

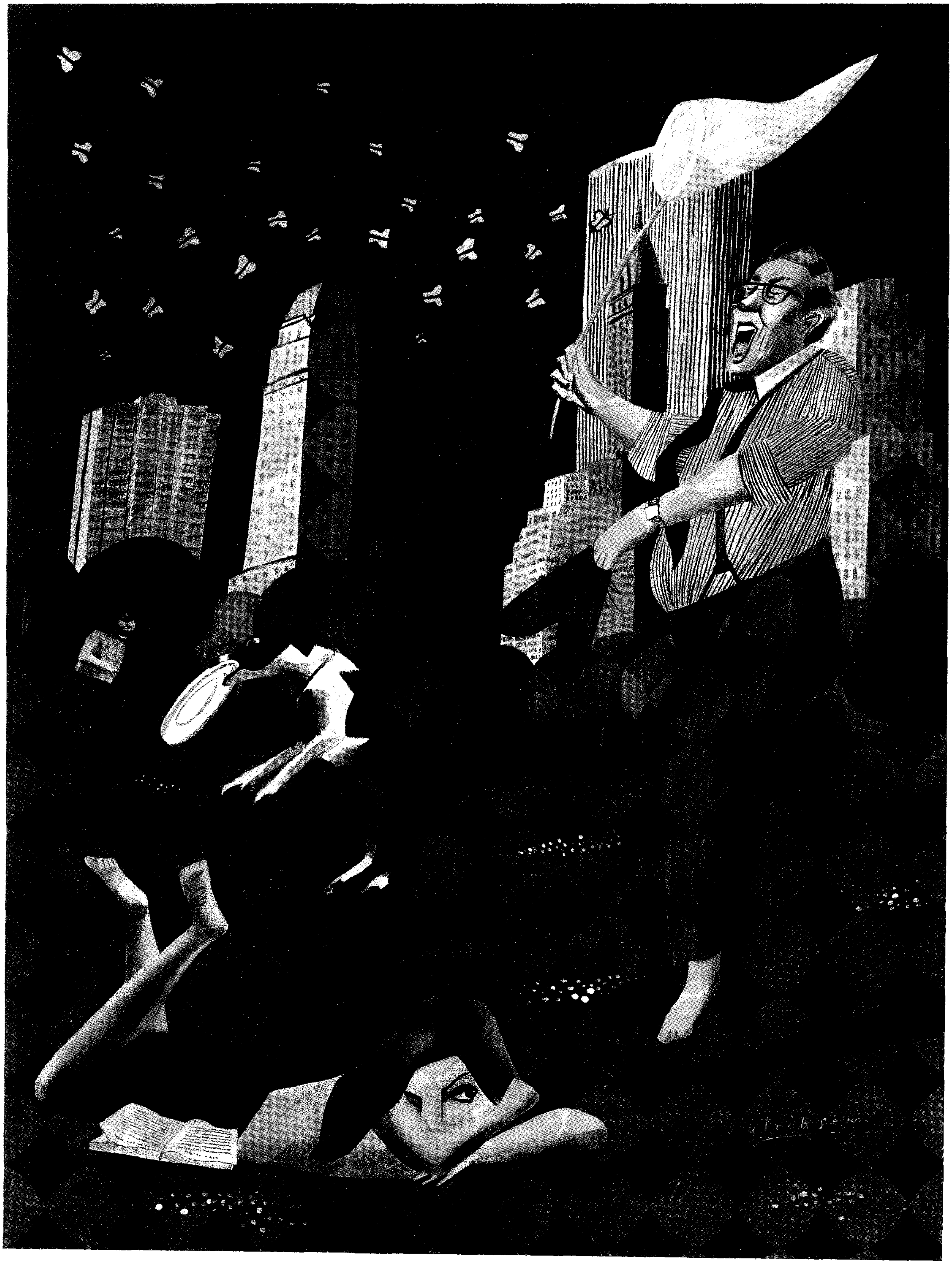
Captain Carroll rolled his shoulders uncomfortably. "Look, that guy is a bad guy," he said, speaking of the section chief. "For the longest time, no one would talk to me about him. When I finally had some evidence, the guy took off. When I do have him and the evidence, I'll *slam* him." The Captain slapped his fist into his hand. "But I'm not gonna stoop to the level of these guys and make summary arrests or go kickin' in doors looking for weapons. I need the evidence."

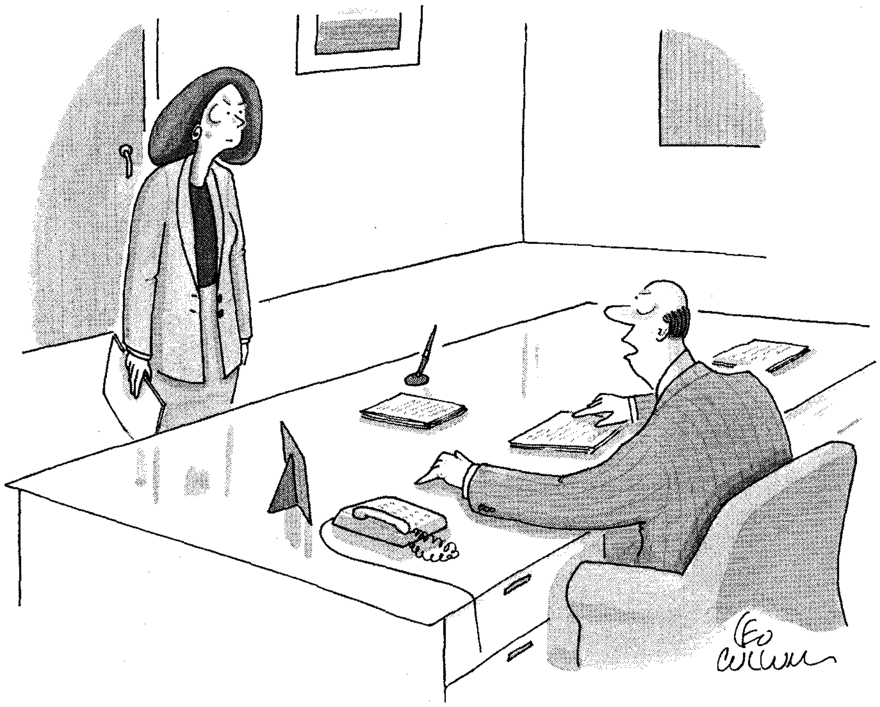
They had reached a strange impasse. Farmer, the staunch supporter of human rights, arguing for preventive detention, and the Captain, who liked to describe himself as "a redneck," arguing for due process.

Farmer felt he'd made his point, and

SKETCHBOOK · BY MARK ULRIKSEN

SPRING BREAK





"Honesty is the best policy, Fernbaugh, but it's not company policy."

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it was getting dark. Soon he had to be going. He and the Captain shook hands.

FROM Captain Carroll's journal:

11 Dec. I've got to slow down and take more time off. . . . Having only 9 people is the main reason we're so busy. We want to help the people and keep what we started going. If we stop, all our work will fall flat. We've done too much good to let it all slip away. We just need more help. Our potential is unlimited here.

9 Jan. Been a couple of weeks since last entry. . . . For awhile, my attitude really sucked and I felt like giving up. Just felt our mission is bogus, Haitians are lazy and worthless and just want a handout, and no support coming from Chain of Command. Most team members had the same attitude. In retrospect, I think it was more holiday depression.

Not everything had been going badly. Nerva Juste had finally been arrested, in Port-au-Prince in late December. 323 had brought him back to the jail next door to the casern and had put him in one of the barren cells to which he himself had allegedly consigned many former victims. The cell was a lot cleaner now, and he wasn't getting beaten.

But S.F. teams in Haiti had recently got some bad publicity in American papers for their friendliness with the FRAPH. The Captain himself had been chastised for this in one article, and he was still upset about it. In a time-honored tradition, the articles laid most of the blame on the soldiers. They did not clearly point out that the soldiers' orders to support the FRAPH came from very high places.

Meanwhile, another team had taken all the equipment that could be salvaged from the local public-works yard and driven it up to another district for another road project that at least had a little funding. Proctor figured that his road-working days were over. "And sad to say, I just don't care," he said.

Why was 323 still here? Most of the team asked that question now. To keep the peace until the United Nations took over, they figured, something that their mere presence accomplished. The U.N. couldn't come soon enough to suit most of them. This had become, Proctor said, "a big babysitting service."

On the list of unresolved issues that he kept in his makeshift operations room Captain Carroll wrote, "FRAPH legal?" He sent the question to higher headquarters, along with his same old requests for International Police Monitors, Army civil-affairs people, relief-agency workers.

WHEN I returned to Mirebalais, early on the afternoon of January 12th, there weren't any Haitian soldiers around, just a handful of so-called interim policemen. Back in December, the Haitian government had sent most of the soldiers off on thirty-day leave—those who hadn't received a week of official interim-police training. In late December, a group of them had gone to their old headquarters in Port-au-Prince to demand their retirement pay. Shooting had started. A platoon of 10th Mountain Infantry had put down the small insurrection. Word was that the Haitian government planned to fire all the members of the Haitian Army when they got back from leave, on the seventeenth of January. One had to figure that there would be a lot of angry Haitian soldiers in the compound at Mirebalais when that happened.

The members of 323 didn't seem worried, though. The day I returned, some of them were sunning themselves on the unroofed concrete porch upstairs. "Suntan ops," Forman explained. But the mood changed abruptly that night.

The Special Forces commander, Colonel Mark Boyatt, gave them the gist of the story over the radio. Two American Special Forces soldiers had stopped a car on the road outside Gonaïves. The passenger in the front seat, a Haitian Army major, who had lost his job, shot one S.F. soldier through the heart and wounded the other; he was himself killed by return fire. A crowd of Haitians captured the driver, who used to work for one of Haiti's former political élite, and beat him.

The men of 323 clustered around the radio, wearing grim looks, many voices murmuring, "God *damn*."

Three American soldiers had committed suicide in Haiti, and one had been wounded. This was the first who had been killed, a remarkable fact. One killed was not a lot out of the thousands in Haiti, unless, of course, that one was a friend. They got more news later on, the men all clustered around the radio again. When the word came that the dead man was Sergeant First Class Gregory Cardott, there was a long collective silence. Standing among his men, Captain Carroll closed his eyes, his head falling backward. "Oh, no!" he said.

"Then he didn't do anything wrong," Forman said. "*He* would have been more careful than anyone."

They all knew Cardott. He was the team sergeant on the A-Team that had worked with them in Mirebalais.

"A waste," Captain Carroll said, and he headed downstairs to the TV room.

"It could've been us if we moved up there," Minor said.

"It could be us *here*," Forman said. "That's what's fucked up about an operation like this. In a war, you kill everybody." He added, "Way I look at it, it could just as easy happen in New York City."

"Easier."

Downstairs, I found Captain Carroll sitting alone, inside a giant, inflated truck tire's inner tube, which they'd scrounged for Robinson Crusoe road projects. He was gazing at a blank TV screen. "Cardott was a nice guy. I got along real well with him." He paused, staring at the TV, then said, "The bad thing is they had probably gotten to where they were doing something that had gotten routine."

Captain Carroll flexed the muscles in his jaw. He looked quite fierce for a moment in the dim light. "I guarantee—I *guarantee*—if they try somethin' here, I'll show no mercy." He was speaking of the Haitian soldiers.

SOMETIME very late the next night, I heard Minor waking up the Captain. Minor said that one of the Haitian soldiers, an interim policeman, had just stumbled drunk up the stairs with a story about Macoutes with guns in the park just outside the compound who were boasting that they were going to attack the Americans. Minor sounded amused. The Captain told him that the story seemed improbable, but to make sure they kept a good watch.

In the morning, the same policeman returned. He was sober, and he told the same story. Then one of the young Haitian interpreters came upstairs. A policeman out by the gate had asked him what would happen if other policemen shot at the Americans. Would the Americans shoot him, too? Captain Carroll began to look thoughtful when still another Haitian arrived, and told the same story about armed Macoutes in the park during the night. And when their friend Madsen came upstairs, looking frightened, and so nervous that he couldn't speak English, a lot of the team, still dressed in T-shirts, gathered around. They trusted Madsen, and Madsen said that he had seen men carrying guns in the town last night. Moreover, Madsen knew everyone in town, but he had never laid eyes on those armed men before.

The team had a meeting. The Captain would send Command a message about all the rumors. What did the team think about asking Command to send a platoon of infantry out here for a few days? At some point, no big rush, but just for a "show of force," for the benefit of anyone out there who *might* be planning something. The team agreed that was a good idea. Thirty-six hours later, looking back on this moment, Captain Carroll said to me, with a look both amused and rueful, "Be careful what you ask for."

COLLECTIVELY, 323 had visited most of the continents and attended most of America's better-known post-Vietnam military adventures. They had all acquired the sorts of martial abilities that many American males fantasize themselves possessing. But none of them had ever been in a serious firefight. The veteran Team Sergeant Forman said of his experience in Desert Storm, "It was kind of a letdown. Like, nobody shot at me." These weren't the sort of men who like to start trouble in bars. I don't think that they wanted a fight so much as they wanted to find out if a fight was what they wanted.

Suntan ops had come to a halt. There was a lot more laughter. A lot more voices were raised.

"What's that movie, 'Sleeping with the Enemy'? We're sleeping *next* to the enemy. Hell, I think we should all run naked through the streets with our M16s. Then they'll all think we're crazy."

"Time to break out the 7.62. A thousand rounds a minute."

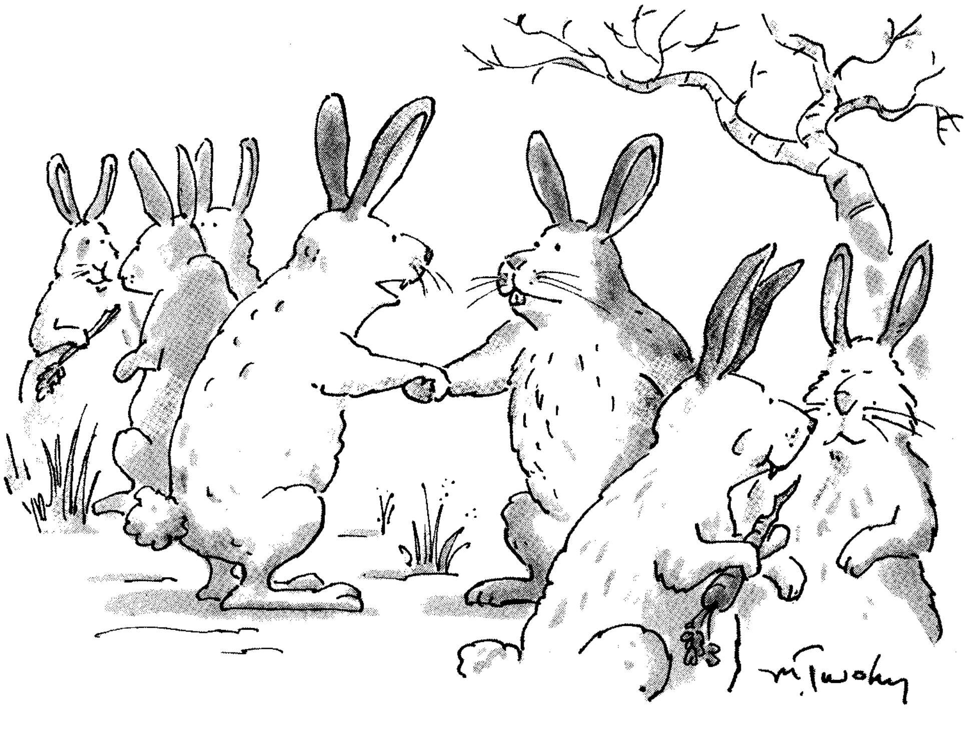
"You know what we *oughta* do? Call in for an immediate air strike."

On the whole, they seemed merely alerted, not worried. Throughout the day and into the evening, I found them sitting on the porches or on their cots, cleaning their M16s and pistols, unloading and reloading magazines. Minor and another sergeant were due to fly out on seven-day leave in a few days. Minor, a weapons specialist, once defined bravery in combat for me: "You controlled your fear long enough to do something stupid." He said now that he was glad he'd be out of here. The other sergeant said, "I'm not. I don't want to miss this."

I found Captain Carroll sitting on the front balcony, cleaning one of the team's machine guns. He worked in silence for a while, with thinking on his face. Then he looked up from his work and over at me. "Were you ever in a firefight?" he asked.

I told him the truth. I never was.

A while later, he said, "Anytime you



"Still doing the egg thing?"

want to go back to Port-au-Prince, let me know.”

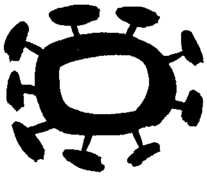
I said I'd like to stay, that I felt much safer here than in a hotel, which was true. Here I had, in effect, my own personal, Special Forces-trained bodyguards.

“Well,” he said. “You know how to shoot an M16.”

I didn't say that I couldn't even remember how to load one. I thought he might make me leave if I did.

I decided to keep my own watch. It was early afternoon, and I was standing on the balcony gazing out over the compound, looking for ominous sights, when I saw one of the policemen open the gate. A pickup truck drove in. In my state of readiness, that seemed truly ominous, but then I saw that the passengers riding in the back were several middle-aged white women in dresses and straw hats.

“We're do-gooders!” one of the women cried cheerily as her Haitian driver helped her down from the truck. She explained that they belonged to Ventures in People, and came from West Bend, Wisconsin. “It's community outreach through the Mothers' Club,” she said. They were here to establish an “outreach food program” at the Mirebalais hospital. Forman told the women to climb onto the Humvee, and he'd give them a ride to the hospital. The scene was a corrective to the mood of the day, Forman at the wheel saying, “Y'all think I'm giving you a ride, but I'm really going to put you to work,” and the women, sitting in back, holding on to their straw hats, laughing merrily at his joke.



It occurred to me as I watched them depart that those women and Captain Carroll, and even Paul Farmer, had something in common. They were all good Americans. You recognize them anywhere in the world, Americans coming to try to do good. For a while, it was hard to imagine armed Macoutes on the prowl now that the Mothers' Club was in town.

That night, Captain Carroll wrote in his journal:

> 14 Jan. SFC Greg Cardott killed in Gonaïves 12 Jan. by ex-FAd'H major who ran roadblock. . . . We received many reports throughout today that Macoutes are planning an attack on us. Guys are being more cautious. I'm concerned. Don't want to overreact but I want to be careful. My men's lives are my responsibility.

The Captain got one of his questions answered, sort of, that night, on Colonel Mark Boyatt's regular radio broadcast—Boyatt called his broadcasts “fireside chats.” The American Ambassador had stated that FRAPH was *not* a political party. S.F. teams must not appear to be overly close to members of FRAPH. And a special message for Mirebalais: Command was working on their problem.

Indeed it was. Team Sergeant Forman was on radio watch when, around nine-thirty, the word came in that a CSAR team—a specially trained combat search-and-rescue team—was even now winging toward Mirebalais. Forman called out the news to the men lounging on the open-air porch.

“I guess I'm not gonna get to sleep tonight after all,” Captain Carroll said.

“Oh, shit, it's gettin' better!” Forman called from the radio room. “We got two platoons and a one-star general coming tomorrow.”

Out on the porch, the men looked at each other.

“Gonna be ugly, man.”

“Gonna get silly.”

Forman called out more news. There were colonels due in soon.

Forman rushed out of the radio room, heading for the bathroom to trim his mustache. And then, minutes later, over that dirt-street town in Haiti's central plateau, all hell, as the war novels say, broke loose.

The whacking of propellers entirely drowned out the music from town. The air felt seismically disturbed. Minor, bare-chested, stood out on the porch, laughing, as he identified aircraft for me. A Black Hawk with an unlighted Cobra gunship trailing. An OH-58 Scout with another unlighted Cobra trailing. Another Cobra, or was that the same one? And a big, faintly droning propeller plane. Was it a Spectre, with guns that fire six thousand rounds a minute?

When American politicians view something as vital, immense resources can be delivered with dispatch. To several rumors of threats by disgruntled Haitian soldiers and unknown Macoutes—threats levelled against a team of well-armed and highly trained S.F. warriors—the Army had launched an impressive response. Out of the night came millions of dollars' worth of equipment, consuming thousands of dollars in blade time. The resources that 323 could command now seemed far from meagre. There were a lot of socket wrenches circling the compound.

Forman came out to the porch and gave this account of a conversation he'd just had with one of the Cobra pilots.

Pilot: “Where are the bad guys?”

Forman: “All peace and quiet down here.”

Pilot: “*Damn!*”

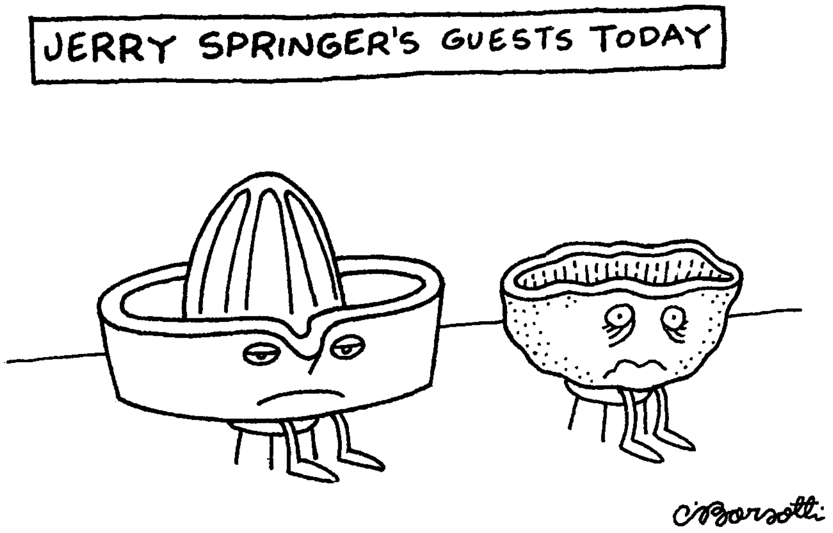
As it turned out, 323 received the CSAR team and only one thirty-man infantry platoon. Those soldiers flew in under the impression that Macoutes were about to overrun the Special Forces camp. And they came accompanied not by one but by two brigadier generals. (A member of 323 said, “One's the platoon leader and one's a squad leader. I wonder which one's gonna walk point.”)

The Captain got up early for the generals, after two hours of sleep. He smiled groggily. “Well, I'm about jump-started.”

In all, over the next three days he received and briefed two generals, one admiral, and several colonels. It took all his ingenuity to think up missions for the many new soldiers in his command. Around the clock for three days, squads of infantry in full battle dress, with a Special Forces sergeant to guide them, prowled in urban-warfare formation down both sides of the streets of Mirebalais. They set up roadblocks on every main road. They even staged a drug bust, which turned up nothing except some people eating breakfast.

On the seventeenth, about fifty Haitian soldiers straggled into the compound, dressed in civilian clothes, back from their thirty-day leave. All of them expected to get fired on the spot. But high-level machinations were still in progress. Word had come from Command that they weren't to be dismissed just yet. For now, the Haitian soldiers' good behavior seemed assured. American soldiers filled the compound. They bristled with weapons. The disgruntled Haitian soldiers went about their business as if on tiptoe.

If there had in fact been armed Macoutes and Haitian soldiers plotting an



attack, they had been routed, without even showing up. It would be hard to imagine a town more peaceful than Mirebalais during those three days. The operation was a slick example of what is known as "force protection." That sometimes seemed like Washington's overriding priority, as if the main reason for sending troops to Haiti had been to keep them safe. But I do think that Washington's solicitude for the safety of its soldiers is refreshing.

When Command finally lifted the siege—on the night of the third day—and all the reinforcements had departed, Captain Carroll sat down on the foot of his cot. He hadn't slept more than four hours in the three days. He let his torso fall back on the cot. He slept that way, in full uniform, his boots on and planted on the floor, for about four hours. He'd have been ready if another general had decided to get out to the action, but none did. Finally, the Captain took his boots off and slept eight hours more in the conventional way.

THE team pulled out of Mirebalais in mid-March. They left the district to a Special Forces team from the Army National Guard—part of the multinational force that is supposed to remain in Haiti for another year. Some of 323's Haitian friends and workers asked them when they were coming back. A few wept.

The Captain felt a little sad himself when he thought about the jobs they hadn't finished, but he told himself that they were leaving the place in capable hands. Mostly, he and his men felt jubilation, mixed with disbelief that they were really going home. It took them only a day to pack a heaping truckload of gear. "When you're gone from home five and a half months, it doesn't take long to pack," the Captain explained.

323 is standing down at Fort Bragg now. The team remains essentially intact, though a couple of the men are planning on going to college, and policy dictates that the Captain will soon be given a new job—no telling what. The Captain returned home with an intestinal parasite and a great weariness and was still recovering from them two weeks later. He said he didn't know what to make of 323's experience in Haiti. "Maybe it hasn't worn off yet," he said.

While 323 was still in Mirebalais, one of the men had offered me his assessment of Operation Uphold Democracy. He spoke in a tone of voice that I thought I'd heard before, in hootches in Vietnam. It's a voice that I imagine has been heard around foxholes and trenches and bivouac fires forever. "I think we should have just lifted the embargo and left Haiti to itself. Does it really matter who's in power? They're still gonna have the rich and the poor and no one in between. It's just a big political play. Ahhh, man, it's fucking disgusting. I don't know what we hope to accomplish. We're still gonna have a shitload of people in boats wanting to go to America. But, I guess it's best not even to try and figure it out."

The men of 323 had left their district in better shape than they had found it. But Washington had not given them the equipment to do as much as they could have done. And that seemed like a waste of competence and enthusiasm. I thought I heard that waste in the soldier's voice. But not in Captain Carroll's. In late January, he was still receiving petitioners. He still wanted to help.

On the morning before I left 323, a dignified man, a clinician and teacher from Gascogne, paid a visit. He spoke sketchy English, so the Captain sat down with him without a translator. They talked for some time about the problems of Gascogne. Then the man put his hand on the Captain's arm, and said, "Captain, with sincerity, let me tell you. Our problem, the international problem, the problem of the world, nobody can solve that. Only God."

"Yeah," said the Captain. "We're never gonna feed all the hungry children, we're never gonna have a good enough road. But we *can improve* those things."

The man smiled. He suddenly looked as if he had something delicious to tell. "You remember when the French people of Haiti before the Haitian revolution—they collect some gold. Before leaving the country, they bury the gold inside the land. In the village of Gascogne, we have something there, and we want to find that just for the development of our section."

The Captain was resting his arms on his knees. He turned his head slowly and looked closely at the man. "Have you seen this spot?"

"A man witness to me. In 1978. Before the departure of the President Jean-Claude Duvalier."

"Mmm," said the Captain. "Well, first of all, don't discuss this with anybody else. You'll have thousands of people digging there. Maybe you can show this to my soldiers tomorrow. Show them the spot."

"But do you have some instrument?"

"I might have one tomorrow," said the Captain. "If so, I'll have them take it with them. O.K.?"

When the man left, I expected the Captain to start laughing, but instead he seemed bemused. A little gold would go a long way in the Mirebalais district. He knew a hundred ways of using some. "It's possible," the Captain said. "Not likely."

Then he fell into one of his silences, one of his long pauses for visible thought. "Not likely," Captain Carroll said. He smiled, as if at himself. "But I hope Sergeant Minor brings back his metal detector." ♦

ONWARD AND UPWARD WITH THE ARTS

THE PLAY'S THE THING

Hollywood icon Ralph Fiennes opens on Broadway next month as Hamlet.

BY ANTHONY LANE

THE stage is bare. The audience is ready, waiting to be swept away. Suddenly, a young man, shrinking into himself like a very old man, scuttles into view. He is gibbering and mumbling under his breath, and you can't quite catch what he says. Then you get it: "To be, or not to be: that is the question"—and so on, the whole speech rattled off as if the young man had learned his oratory at a racetrack. He is not really thinking, not if he can help it. His mind is under siege, and his sole desire is to free it as fast as possible. Here, you tell yourself, is a Hamlet of the moment—hurried and homeless, stranded so far from happiness that it makes him laugh.

Ralph Fiennes's Hamlet, in a production directed by Jonathan Kent, is coming to New York from London; previews begin this week, and the show will open at the Belasco on May 2nd. A sizable slice of the audience, I suspect, will be made up of moviegoers tempted away from the multiplex and into the spit-and-cough of live performance by the prospect of observing an idol in the flesh. And flesh is what they will get. As if to prove how readily he can slough off the sheen of his cinematic presence, Fiennes offers up a Hamlet helplessly in thrall to physical sensation. He greets his mother with a kiss, of course, but need it be quite so long? The rest of the court looks away, embarrassed. At one point, he even kisses *Claudius*. By the time Fiennes plants his lips on Yorick's mucky skull, as if curious about the taste of mortal soil, you can taste the rot yourself. The one person who needs to be kissed, of course, gets short and cruel shrift: in the course of directing Ophelia to a nunnery, he casually flips up her skirt and grabs her by the crotch.

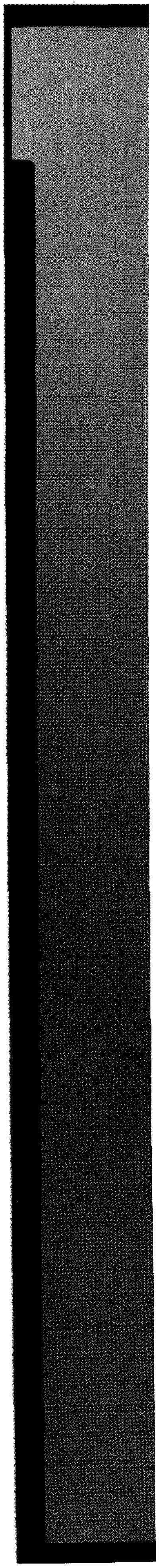
In typical Fiennes fashion, "Hamlet" will complicate rather than confirm what we know, or presume we know, about Fiennes's range and reach. American audiences, primed for an evening of nobility, will find it streaked with nastiness; the serious young scholar nips around the stage like a spider. The question is: What makes Ralph run? Was he always like this?

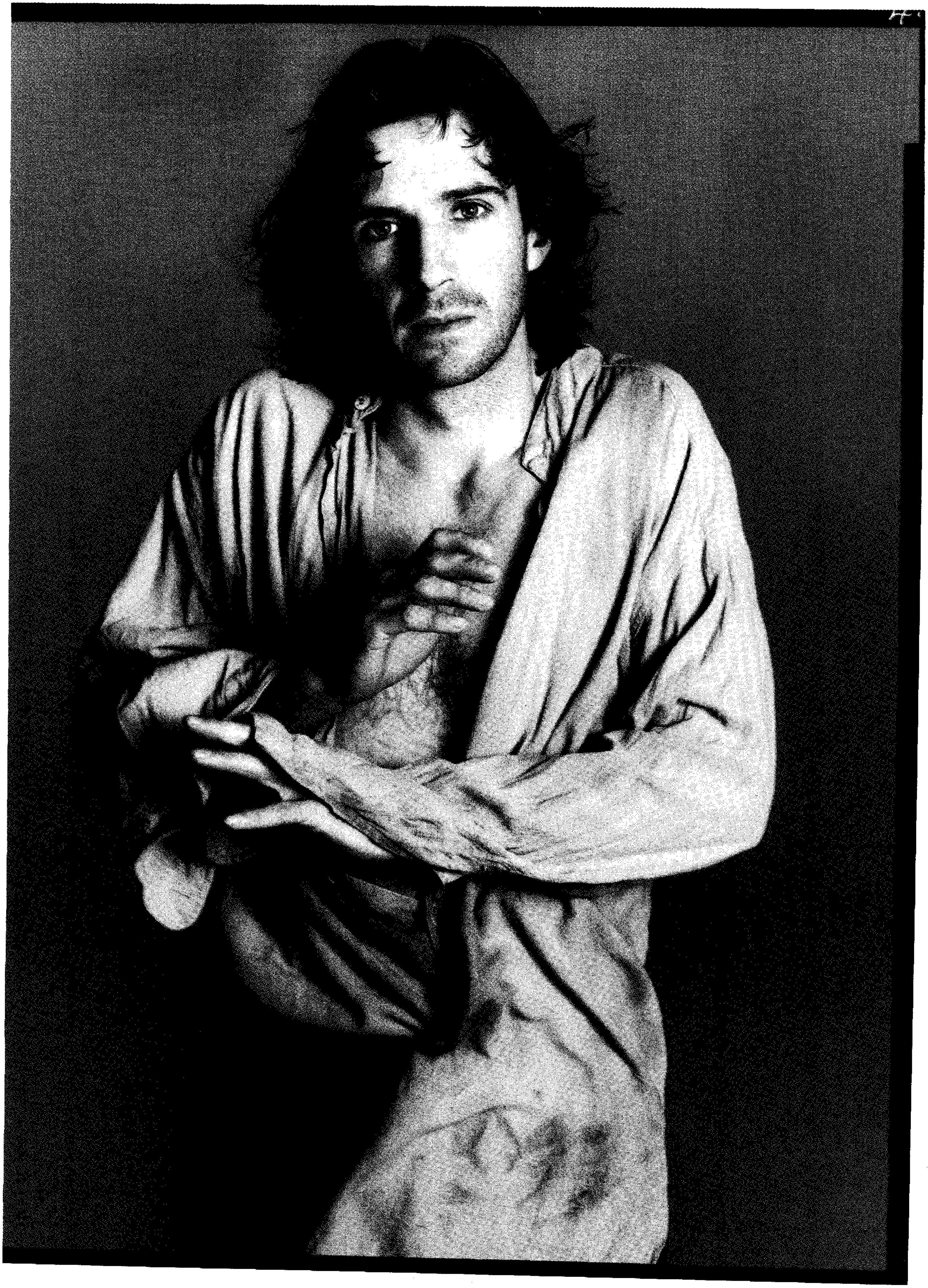
Fiennes lives in southeast London, between the districts of Peckham and Dulwich, with his wife, the actress Alex Kingston. "I'm not going to move anywhere in a hurry," he says. "We're making our home really a home, like a pair of shoes that become part of you." And part of the Fiennes tradition. The young Ralph—born in Suffolk, shifting later to Dorset and Ireland—grew up in what was, by all accounts, a full and gifted household, the kind that English novelists perpetually struggle to invent. He was the eldest of six children: his sister, Martha, has become a director; one brother, Joseph, is himself an actor. Their father is a photographer; their mother wrote novels under the name Jennifer Lash, and started painting seriously in the nineteen-eighties. She died of cancer in 1993, and remains a sustaining influence. Shortly before her death, she saw "Schindler's List."

His acting career began a decade ago. The young Fiennes, living in London, had dropped out of art school in Chelsea, switched to the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art, and become a regular at the National Theatre. He won good notices for his work in "Six Characters in Search of an Author" and a Brian Friel version of "Fathers and Sons," and then spent four seasons with the Royal Shakespeare Company, playing roles like Henry VI, Berowne in "Love's

PHOTOGRAPH BY RICHARD AVEDON

Ralph Fiennes, London, March 17, 1995.

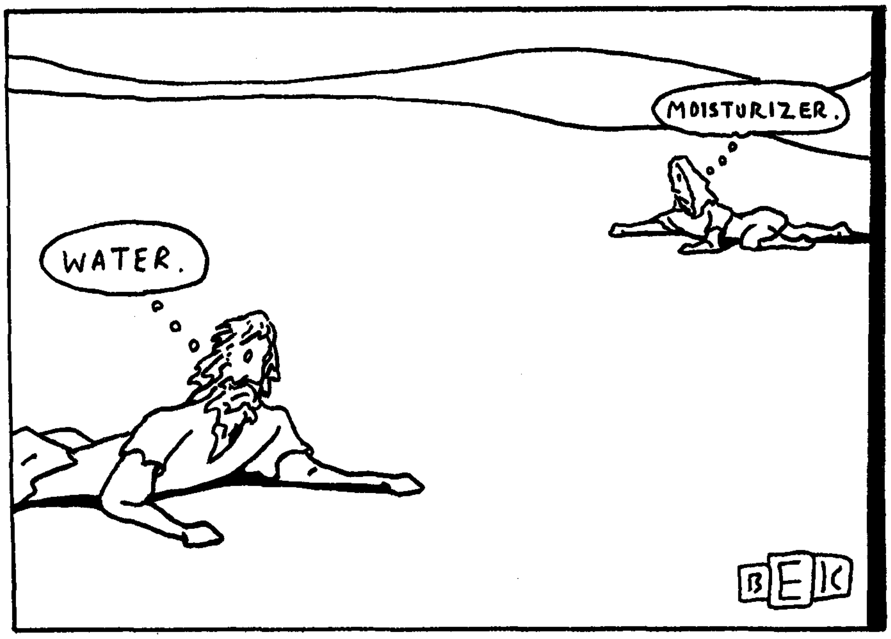




Labour's Lost," Edmund in "King Lear." Doing Shakespeare, he has said, taught him that the actor "must stop getting in his own way." In 1992, he made a TV movie called "A Dangerous Man: Lawrence After Arabia"; it was this performance, with its quality of intense repose, that is said to have caught the eye of Steven Spielberg. Hence, "Schindler's List," and the role of S.S. Officer Amon Goeth. Our first sight of Fiennes showed that something was new: not just the razor-cut hair, or the heaviness that seemed like a surplus of sheer hatred, but the certainty that we were no longer watching an act. He was not getting in his own way. Hunched in the rear of a staff car, Goeth is driven through the ghetto of Kraków, holding a handkerchief to his face—because of either a bad cold or a reluctance to breathe alien air. Asked if he has any questions, he says, "Yes, why is the top down? I'm fucking freezing." It is a terrifying introduction; if he had merely complained about the Jews around him, we might have grasped the nature of the man, but he doesn't even *notice* them. In his mind, they are already cancelled out.

In the space of two years, and two movies, the face of Fiennes has become America's most haunted, a storehouse of dark thoughts. In casting the role of Charles Van Doren for "Quiz Show," Robert Redford needed a sacrificial lamb, someone to be led astray and gutted by TV, a clean and clever all-American; he chose an all-Englishman. So far, Fiennes has not put a foot wrong; he sidestepped from kill-guy to fall guy, then crunched the two together and made his next move. At the age of thirty-two, he knew it was time to play Hamlet. "I have a feeling that if I'd played it when I was, say, twenty-three or twenty-four—I don't think I would have investigated in quite the same way," Fiennes explains. "Investigated" is the right word. There are moments in the production when he seems to be not playing the part so much as studying its pathology: "O God! I could be bounded in a nutshell, and count myself a king of infinite space—were it not that I have bad dreams." Untersturmführer Goeth would understand.

The day after the new production finished its London run, I was slated to meet Fiennes, and didn't know what to expect. With his hair over his collar, he still looked like Hamlet, but Hamlet playing hooky from Elsinore for a day. Fiennes is naturally grand of gesture; his hands rubbed at his chest to indicate distress, as they had done onstage, and, in trying to give some sense of the atmosphere on location for "Schindler's List," he flung his arms wide—Spielberg, in other words, was really *flying*. Previous accounts of Fiennes report a reticence, an indwelling solemnity that can leave you with a chill, but the man himself is equable and outgoing, asking as many questions as are put to him. What he does do is check himself in mid-speech, feeling his way to an answer instead of serving up what he already knows. This may well be a Hamlet hangover; there were points of tension onstage when he seemed genuinely *struck* by ideas—never entertaining them, but suffering their assaults. During the great rant against Claudius—"Remorseless, treacherous, lecherous, kindless villain!"—Fiennes knocked his own forehead with his fist, as if to shake the adjectives out one by one. Is this what happens to the voicing of Shakespeare: a growing sense of struggle, a descent from air to sullen earth? We think of Olivier as smooth and oiled, but he was rough and athletic by comparison with Gielgud, who intoned the lines like a bishop saying grace; and Gielgud was a comedown after what we know about the Victorian ululations of Henry Irving, who would surely crack us up if he performed today. Each new wave of Shakespearean players believes that it is toughening up the act of the previous generation, tightening the nuts, getting its hands dirty; Ralph Fiennes makes even Richard Burton sound a bit bombastic, but you can bet that in ten or twenty years' time some thuggish new Hamlet will remember the Fiennes routine as tasteful and polished, like old silver.



One of the problems with having fiendish good looks is that you can tempt almost anyone to do almost anything you want, whether your victim wants to or not—particularly if not. That was the driving irony of "Quiz Show," in which the golden boy himself became the tempted one, soaring into fame like Icarus. The movie reminded us that appearances count; that a star is made in the gaze of a lens, before dramatic technique—however skilled—has time to kick in. You can tell a star just from a still. Some of Fiennes's best scenes even *look* like stills: he is most beautiful when he's holding steady, and Van Doren is never more steady than when he's locked alone in guilt.

You need to go a long way back to find such a severe case of self-possession; it was only when I was watching "Quiz Show" for the second time that I noticed how the Fiennes profile matches that of John Barrymore. No wonder Redford scrutinizes Van Doren from the side or in half-face shots; for all his bearing, and for all the rich,

CAIN

Bare feet planted on the turquoise square
your father painted on the concrete floor,
you ironed with the iron with the cloth-covered cord
that kept twisting and untwisting until one day,

that summer, there was a charge, not a very
large charge, but a charge
nonetheless. There was an orange flash
from the place where the black knit

cord sleeve met the black bottom
of the iron and there was a tingling
coming through the bottom of your sweating feet
onto the cold concrete floor. The current spread

until everything was buzzing,
the green piano bench, the green wheelbarrow
with the green philodendron, the green grass
outside the Dutch door that your father

painted violet. The colors of everything
were coming undone until you put
the iron down. This had nothing to do
with you. This is not

a moral story. This is merely a reminder
of what there is in your
and everyone else's house: the jelly jar
full of gasoline, the crowbar,

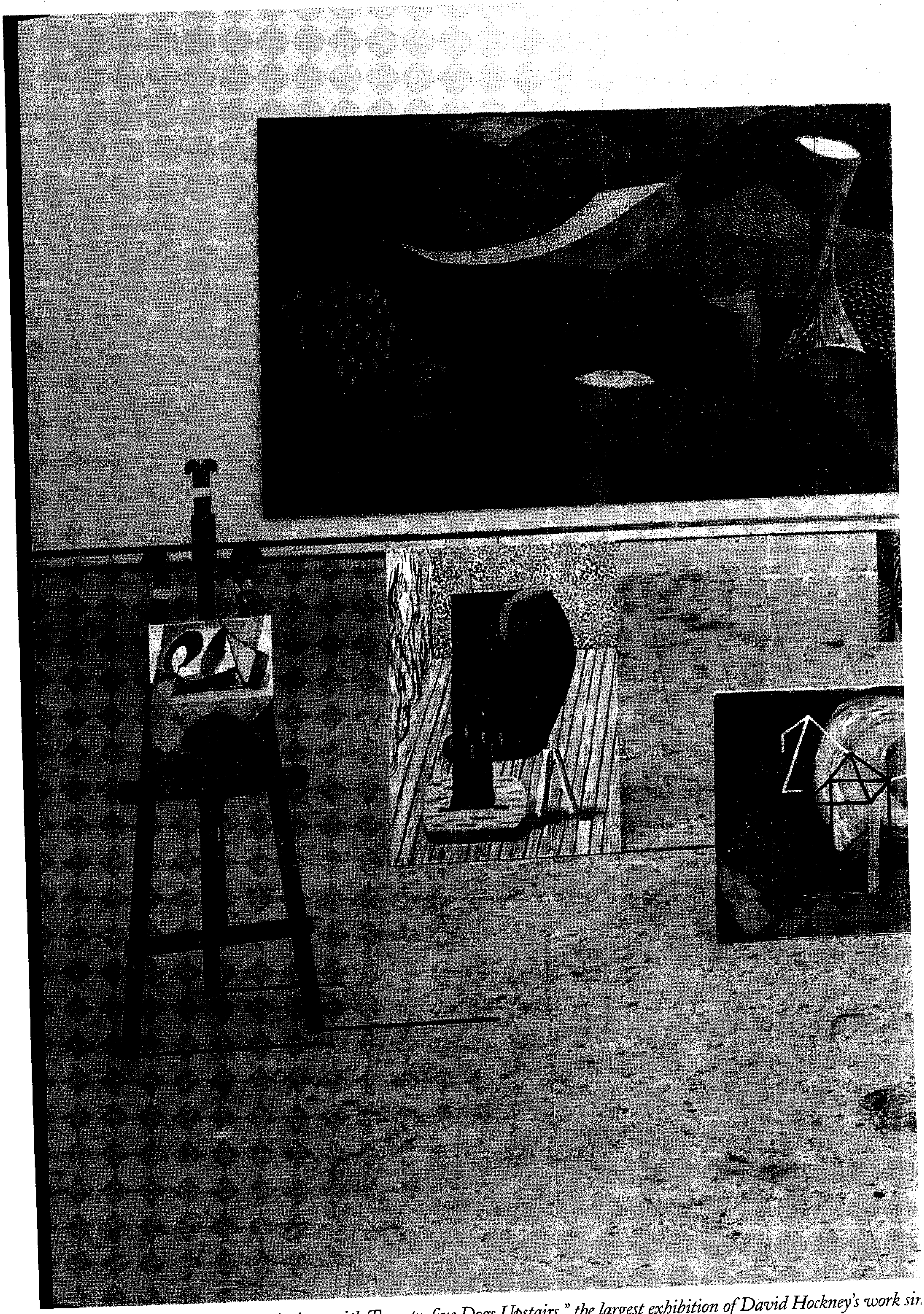
the axe. All the simple implements
of order and none of the evidence
of it. All the extensions
of the human hand.

—Caroline Fraser

back-of-the-throat tones in which he delivers his lines, Fiennes is like a silent-movie star in his ability to carry a closeup, to let his eyes and his composure do the work for him. We stare at him as our grandparents stared at John Gilbert—as Garbo stared at him, asking herself what was going on behind the perfect front, what her lover might be thinking of. In Gilbert's case, the answer was "Very little"; in Barrymore's, "A gin and tonic." In the case of Ralph Fiennes, it's perplexity, and the pleasures that it threatens to spoil. At first glance, his characters feel disparate, but then you think again: Hamlet and Van Doren and Goeth—the chronic soliloquist with his head in his books, the preppy sweating in his soundproof booth, the sag-bellied sadist picking off distant Jews from his balcony. If there is a ground bass to Fiennes's work, a rhythm that beats beneath all three roles, it is loneliness driven to extremes.

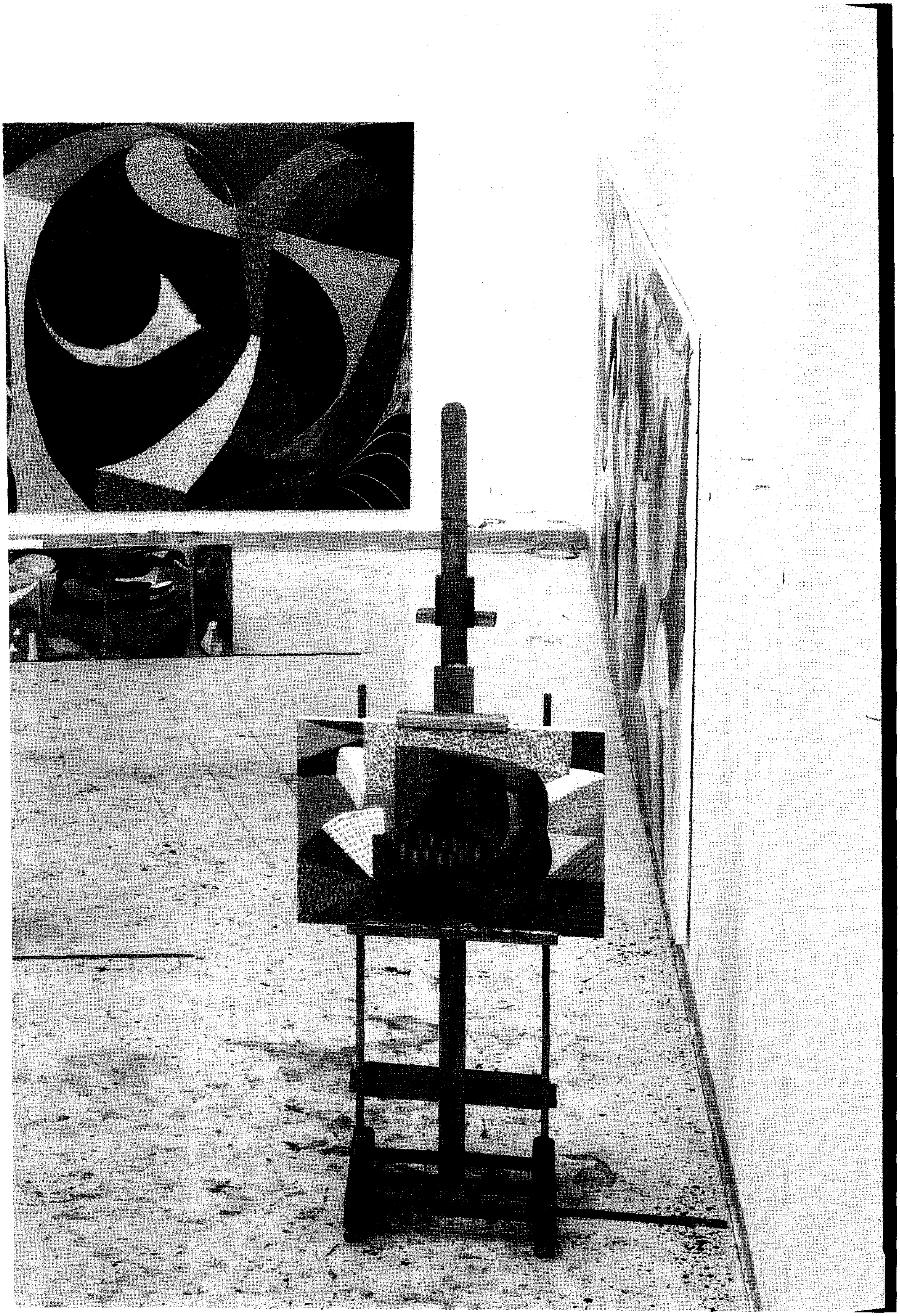
His next extreme comes with "Strange Days," a science-fiction thriller directed by Kathryn Bigelow, in which he co-stars with Angela Bassett. The film is being readied for summer release; Fiennes has to spend a couple of days looping the soundtrack before he opens in "Hamlet." Recalling the long, breath-sucking chase sequences in Bigelow's "Point Break" and "Blue Steel," I am relieved to hear that the new movie has more of the same. Stills of the picture, which is set in 1999, show Fiennes looking woundingly handsome in black leather pants, with his shirt ripped open, plainly in all kinds of trouble—looking more like Hamlet, in fact, than Hamlet does. This character is "hugely lonely," according to Fiennes. "He's in love with someone who doesn't give a shit about him, he's living on memories of a past time. He goes back to his apartment, a sort of hellhole, all these bits of software around, pizza cartons, Chinese cartons . . ." Put like that, it has the true stink of the loveless, although one hopes, for Fiennes's sake, that he will not be doomed to plots of unrequited passion. He *has* made a love story—a 1992 version of "Wuthering Heights," with Juliette Binoche—but it was not a success; maybe the results will be better with "The English Patient," an adaptation of Michael Ondaatje's novel. Again, Fiennes will star opposite Binoche, and you can't help worrying about the two of them together, both so adept at conveying privacy—graceful, easily bruised, but tough to crack.

If there is any love in the work of Ralph Fiennes, it comes in "Quiz Show." Looking back on the movie, you find the exposure of media fakery slightly fading away; what stays with you, instead, is a couple of scenes between Fiennes and an infinitely relaxed Paul Scofield. In the first we see Charles in the kitchen at night, cooling his cheek with a bottle of milk as though he were burning with shame, before being joined by his father for a talk about old times; in the second, the two men lock horns in a lecture theatre. Why should these sequences mean so much? Is it because they distill the argument of the film into its purest form—Icarus coming clean with Daedalus? Or is it because they remind you of "Hamlet," of another young prince trying in vain to live up to his father? "Hamlet is such a meeting point for so many strands in one's life—other things one has done—that inevitably everything feeds in at some point," Fiennes says. Only with a few actors do you get this feeling: a sense that every role is gathering nourishment from the previous one and seeping subtly into the next. By this logic, then, "Hamlet" was waiting to happen. There's no getting away from the damn play. ♦



"Some Very Large New Paintings with Twenty-five Dogs Upstairs," the largest exhibition of David Hockney's work si

BY DAVID HOCKNEY



88, will be at L.A. Louver, in Venice, California, through May 6th. Photograph by Hockney and Richard Schmidt.

FICTION

IN ROSEAU

BY JAMAICA KINCAID

IT was perhaps inevitable that as soon as I came to know, like the back of my hand, the long walk from my father's house to my school, in the next village, I was to leave it. This walk, all five miles of it one way, five miles of it the other, never ceased to be of some terror for all the children who walked it; we tried never to be alone. We walked in groups always. In any one year, at any one time, there were not more than a dozen of us, more boys than girls; we were not friends—friendships were discouraged. We were never to trust one another. This was like a motto repeated to us by our parents; it was a part of my upbringing, like a rule of good manners: You cannot trust these people, my father would say to me, perhaps the very words that the other children's parents were saying to them, perhaps even at the same time. That "these people" were ourselves, that this insistence on mistrust of others—people who looked very much like us, shared a common history of suffering and humiliation and enslavement and genocide—should be taught to us even as children is no longer a mystery to me. The people we should naturally mistrust were beyond our influence completely, and what we needed to defeat them, to rid ourselves of them, was something far more powerful than mistrust. Mistrust of one another was just one of the many feelings we had for one another, all of them the opposite of love, all of them standing in the place of love. It was as if we were in a joust with one another for a secret prize; any expression of love, then, would not be sincere, for love might give someone else the advantage. We were not friends. We walked together; it was a companionship based on fear, and fear of things we could not see, and when those things were seen we often could not really comprehend the danger, so confusing was much of reality. It was only after we left the immediate confines of our village and were out of the sight of our parents that we drew close to one another.

MY father had inherited the ghosty paleness of his own father, the skin that looks as if it were waiting for another skin, a real skin, to come and cover it up; and his eyes were gray, like his own father's eyes; and his hair was red and brown like his father's also, only the texture of his hair, thick and tightly curled, was like his mother's hair. She was a woman from Africa. Where in Africa, no one knew—and what good would it do to find out?—but she was from somewhere in Africa, that place on the map, the one I had seen in school, that is a configuration of shapes and shades of yellow.

I did not tell my father that one day when returning from school alone I saw a spotted monkey sitting in a tree and I threw three stones at it. The monkey caught the third one and threw it back at me and struck me over my left eye, in the hair of my eyebrow, and I bled furiously, as if I would never stop. I somehow knew that the red berries of a certain bush would stop the flow of blood. My father, when he saw my wound, thought that it had come from the hands of a schoolmate—a boy, someone I was so protective of that I would not reveal his identity. It was then that he began to make plans to send me to school in Roseau, to get me away from the bad influences of children who would wound me, whom I protected from his wrath, and who, he was certain, were male. And after this outburst of emotion—which was meant as an expression of his love for me but only made me feel anew the hatred and isolation in which we all lived—his face again became a mask, so hard to read.

And on that road, which I came to know so well, I spent some of the sweetest moments of my life. On a long stretch of it in the late afternoon I could see the reflection of the sun's light on the surface of the seawater, and it always had the quality of an expectation just about to be fulfilled, as if at any moment a small city made of that special light of the sun on the water would arise and from it might flow a joy I had not yet imagined. And I knew a place, just off the side of this road, where the sweetest cashews grew, and the juice from their fruit would cause blisters to form on my lips, and my tongue to feel as if it were caught in a bundle of twine, temporarily making speech difficult, and I found this—the difficulty of speaking, the possibility that it might be a struggle for me ever to speak again—delicious. And it was on that road that I first walked directly from one weather system to another: from a cold, heavy rain into a bright, clear midday heat. And it was on this road that my half sister, the girl child of my father and his wife—the woman who was not my mother—was travelling on a bicycle to meet a man my father had forbidden her to see and whom she would marry, when she had an accident. She fell over a precipice, and was left lame and barren. That is not a happy memory; her suffering, even now, is very real to me.

Not very long after I came to live with them, when I was a small girl, my father's wife began to have her own children. She had two, the first one a boy, the second one a girl. This had two predictable outcomes: she left me alone, and she valued her son more than she valued her daughter. That she did not think very much of the person who was most like her, a daughter, a female, was so normal that it would only have been noticed if it had been otherwise: to people like us, despising what was most like ourselves was almost a law of nature. This fact of my sister's life made me feel overwhelmingly sympathetic to her; she did not like me, she was told by her mother that I was an enemy of hers, that I was not to be trusted, that I was like a thief in that house, waiting for the moment when I could rob them of their inheritance. This was convincing to my sister, and she distrusted and disliked me; the first words

FILIP PAGOWSKI

she could speak that formed an insult were directed toward me. My father's wife always said to me, in private, when my father was not there, that I could not be his child, because I did not look like him—and it was true that I did not have any of his physical characteristics. My sister, though, did look like him; her hair and eyes were the same color as his, red and gray; her skin, too, was the same color as his—ghostly pale. But she did not have his calm or his patience; she walked like a warrior and could not contain the fury that was inside her. She did not have his quality of keeping her own counsel; every thought that came into her mind had to be voiced, so that whenever she saw me she would let me know immediately what my presence suggested to her. I never hated her, I only had sympathy for her; her tragedy was greater than mine; her mother did not love her, but her mother was alive, and every day she saw her mother and every day her mother let her know that she was not loved. My own mother was dead.

AND so I had come to know well the world in which I was living. I knew how to interpret the long silences my father's wife had constructed between us. Sometimes these silences were nothing at all, sometimes they were filled with pure evil; sometimes she meant to see me dead, sometimes my being alive was of no interest to her.

To observe any human being from infancy, to see this someone come into existence—to see experience collect in the eyes, around the corners of the mouth, the weighing down of brow, the thick gathering around the waist, the breasts, the slowing down of footsteps not in old age but simply with the caution of life; all this is something wonderful to observe, for such apparently is life itself; it is an invisible current between the two, observed and observer, beheld and beholder, and I believe that no life is complete, no life is really whole, without this invisible current, which is in many ways a definition of love. No one observed and beheld me; I observed and beheld myself. The invisible current went out and it came back to me. I came then to love myself in defiance, from despair, because there was nothing else; such a love will do, but it will only do; it is not the best kind, it has the taste of something left out on a shelf too long that has turned rancid, and when eaten it makes the stomach turn.

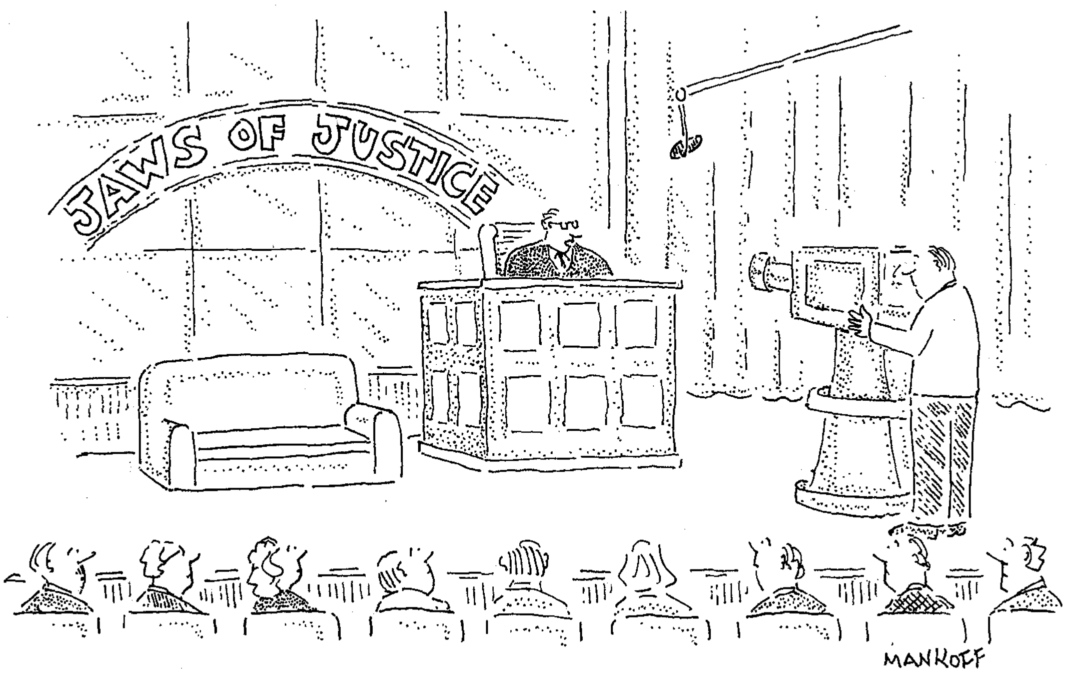
When I first saw the thick, red fluid of my menstrual blood, I was not surprised and I was not afraid. I had never heard of it, I had not been expecting it, I was twelve years old, but its appearance, to my young mind, to my body and soul, had the force of a destiny foretold; it was as if I had always known of it but had never admitted it to consciousness, had never known how to put it into words. It appeared that first time, so thick and red and plentiful that it was impossible to think of it as an omen or a warning of some kind, a symbol; it was just its real self, my menstrual flow, and I knew immediately that its failure to appear, regularly, after a certain interval, could only mean a great deal of trouble for myself. Perhaps I knew then that the child in me would never be stilled enough to allow me to have a child of my own. I bought from a baker four bags—the kind in which flour was shipped—and after removing the dyed brand markings through a long process of washing and bleaching them in the hot sun, I made four squares from each and used these to catch my blood as it flowed from between my legs.

It was around then, too, that the texture of my body and the smell of my body began to change; coarse hairs appeared under my arms and in the space between my legs, where there had been none before, my hips widened, my chest thickened and swelled up, slightly at first, and then there was a deep space between my two breasts; the hair on my head grew long and soft, and the waves in it deepened, my lips spread across my face and thickened into the shape of a heart that had been stepped on. I used then to stare at myself in an old piece of a broken looking glass I had found in some rubbish under my father's house. The sight of my changing self did not frighten me; I only wondered how I would look eventually, and I never doubted that I would like completely whatever stared back at me. And so, too, the smell from my underarms and between my legs changed, and this change pleased me; in those places the smell there became pungent, sharp, as if something were in the process of fermenting, slowly; in private then, as now, my hands almost never left those places, and when I was in public, these same hands were always not far from my nose, I so enjoyed the way I smelled.

AT the age of fourteen I had exhausted the resources of the tiny school in Massacre, the village between Roseau and Mahaut. I really knew much more than that school could teach me. I could sense from the beginning of my life that I would know things when I needed to know them, and I had known for a long time that I could trust my own instinct about things—that if I was ever in a difficult situation, if I thought about it long enough, a solution would appear to me. I could not know then that there would be limitations to having such a view of life, but in any case my life was already small and limited in its own way.

I also knew by then the history of an array of people I would never meet, and that in itself should not have kept me from knowing of them; it was only that this history of peoples that I would never meet—Romans, Gauls, Saxons, Britons, the British People—had behind it a malicious intent, which was to make me feel humiliated, humbled, small. And once I had identified and accepted this malice directed at me, I became fascinated with this expression of vanity: the perfume of your own name and your own deeds is so intoxicating that it never causes you to feel weary; it is its own inspiration; it is its own renewal; its demise is caused by factors independent of itself. And I learned, too, that no one can truly judge herself, for to describe your own transgressions is to forgive yourself for them; to give voice, to confess your bad deeds is also at once to forgive yourself, and so silence becomes the only form of self-punishment.

I had never been to Roseau until that day in my fourteenth year when my father took me to the house of a man he knew, Monsieur Labatte, Monsieur Jacques Labatte—Jack, as I came to call him in the bitter, sweet dark of night. He, like my father, was a man of no principles, and this did not surprise or disappoint me—this did not make me like him more, this did not make me like him less. He and my father knew each other through financial arrangements they made with each other. They called each other "friend," and the fragility of the foundation on which this friendship was built would cause sadness only in someone who did not love the world and all



"My next guest is a charming grifter with a record as long as your arm. Let's give him a big 'Jaws of Justice' welcome."

the material things in it. And Roseau, even then—when the reality of every situation had to be disguised and called something else, something the opposite of its true self—was not referred to as a city; it was called "the capital," the capital of Dominica. It, too, had a fragile foundation, and from time to time was destroyed by forces of nature, by a hurricane or by water coming from the sky as if suddenly the sea were above and the heavens below. And, again, Roseau could not be called a city, because it could not embody such a noble inspiration, it was not really a center of commerce and culture, of exchange of ideas among people, not a place of intrigue, a place in which plots are hatched and the destinies of many are determined. It was an outpost, a way station for people for whom things had gone wrong, either because of their own actions or through no fault of their own; and there were then so many places like Roseau, outposts of despair; for conqueror and conquered alike these places were the capitals of nothing but despair; this did not surprise the ones forcibly brought to live in such a place; it only surprised the ones who chose it as the place to spend the rest of their lives.

But, even so, in this place there was some beauty, unexpected and therefore thrilling: it could be seen in the way the houses were all closely pressed together, jammed up, small and crooked, as if ill-built on purpose, painted in the harsh hues of red, blue, green, or yellow, or sometimes not painted at all, and the bare wood thus exposed to the elements turned a bright gray; and in this sort of house lived people whose skins glistened with exhaustion and whose faces were sad even when they had a reason to be happy, people for whom history had been a big, dark room, and this had made them hate silence. Sometimes there was a gentle wind and sometimes the stillness of the trees, and sometimes the sun setting and sometimes the dawn opening up, and there was the sweet, sickening smell of the white lily that bloomed only at night, and the sweet, sickening smell of something dead, animal, rotting. And this beauty, when I first saw it—I saw it in parts, not all at once—made me glad to be alive, and I could not explain it, this feeling of happiness, gladness, at the sight of the new and the strange, the unfamiliar; and then, long, long after, when all these things had become a part of me, a part of my everyday life, this feeling of happiness was no longer possible. But I would yearn for it—to feel new again, to feel the irritation of the new again, to feel within myself a fountain of joy springing up from this irritation. I long now to feel fresh again, to feel I will never die, but that is not possible. I can only long for it; I can never be that way again.

After my father removed me from his house and from the presence of his wife, I came to understand that he knew it was necessary to do so. I never knew what he noticed about me, I never knew what he wanted of me or from me; at the time it seemed to have a purpose, this removing me to Roseau. He wanted me to continue to go to school and someday to become a schoolteacher; he wanted to say that his daughter was a teacher in a school. That I might have had aspirations of my own would not have occurred to him, and if I had any aspirations of my own I did not know of them. How the atmosphere in his own house felt to him, I did not know. What he saw in my face, he never told me. But he took me to this house of a man he knew in business and left me in the care of this man and his wife. I was a boarder but I paid my own way. In exchange for my room and board I performed some household tasks. I did not object, I could not object, I did not want to object; I did not know then how to object openly. I met Monsieur and Madame in the afternoon, a hot afternoon; I met her first, alone; he was in a room by himself, in another part of their house, in a room where he kept money, which he liked to count over and over again; it was not all the money he had.

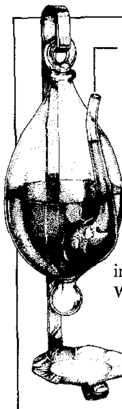
When I first met Madame Labatte, she was standing in the doorway of her nice house, with its nice clean yard full of flowers and piles of stones neatly arranged; to her left and to her right were two large clumps of plumbago with blue blooms that were still in the hot air. She wore a white dress made of a coarse cloth, and it was decorated with embroidery of flowers and leaves; I noticed this because it was a dress people in Mahaut would only have worn to church on Sundays. Her dress was not worn out and it was clean; it was not stylishly cut; it was loose, fitting her badly, as if her body were no longer of any interest to her. My father spoke to her, she spoke to my father, she spoke to me; she looked at me, I looked at her, but it was not to size each other up. I did not know what she thought she saw in my eyes, but I can say now that I had an instinctive feeling of sympathy for her; I did not know why sympathy, why not the opposite of that, but sympathy was what I felt all the same. It might have been because she looked like someone who had got something she had so very much wanted.

She had very much wanted to marry Monsieur Labatte—I was told that by the woman who came each day to wash their clothes. To want desperately to marry men, I have come to see, is not a mistake women make; it is only that, well, what else is left for them to do? I was never told why she wanted to marry him, but I made a guess: he had a strong body, she was drawn to his strong body, his strong hands, his strong mouth; it was a big wide mouth and it must have covered hers up whenever he kissed her; it swallowed mine up whenever he kissed me. She was not a frail woman when they first met; she only became frail afterward. He wore her out. When they first met, he would not marry her, he would not marry any woman then. They would bear him children, and if the children were boys, these boys were given his full name, but he never married the mothers. Madame Labatte found a way; she fed him food she had cooked in a sauce made with her own menstrual blood, and it bound him to her, and they were married. In time, this spell wore off and could not be made to work again. He turned on her—not in anger, for he never became aware of the trap that had been set for him; he turned on her with the strength of that weapon he carried between his legs, and he wore her out.

Her hair was gray, and this was not from age; like so much about her, it had just lost its vitality, it lay on her head without any real life to it; her hands hung at her side, slack; she had been beautiful when she was young, the way all people are; but on her face then, when I met her, was the defeated person she had become. Defeat is not beautiful; it is not ugly, but it is not beautiful either. I was young then, I did not know; when I looked at her and felt sympathy, I also felt revulsion. I felt: This must never happen to me. I meant that I would not allow the passage of time or the full weight of desire to make a pawn of me. I was so young, and felt my convictions powerfully; I felt strong and I felt I would always be so. And at that moment the clothes I was wearing became too small, my bosoms grew out and pressed against my blouse; my hair touched my shoulders in a caress that caused me to shiver inside; my legs were hot and between them was a moisture, a sweet smelly stickiness. I was alive, and I could tell that standing before me was a woman who was not; it was almost as if I sensed a danger and quickly made a defense for myself; in seeing the thing I might be, I too early became its opposite.

This woman liked me, and her husband liked me. It pleased her that he liked me. By the time he emerged from the room where he kept his money, to greet my father and me, Madame Labatte had already told me to make myself at home, to regard her as if she were my own mother, to feel safe whenever she was near. She could not know what such words meant to me—what it meant to hear a woman say them to me. Of course I did not believe her, I did not fool myself, but I knew that when she was saying those things to me she really meant to say them. I liked her so very much, her the shadow of her former self, so grateful for my presence because she was no longer alone with her prize and her defeat. He did not speak to me right away; he did not care that it was me and not someone else my father had asked him to accommodate. He liked the quiet greed in my father, and my father liked the simple greed in him. They were a match; the one could betray the other at any time, perhaps at that moment they had already done so. Monsieur Labatte was already a rich man, more rich than my father. He had better connections; he had not wasted his time marrying for love, marrying a poor Caribe woman—my mother.

I OCCUPIED a room that was attached to the kitchen; the kitchen was not a part of the house itself. I was enjoying the absence of the constant threat posed to me by my father's wife, even as I could feel the burden of my life—the short past, the unknown future. I could write letters to my father, letters that contained simple truths: the days seem shorter in Roseau than the days in Mahaut; the



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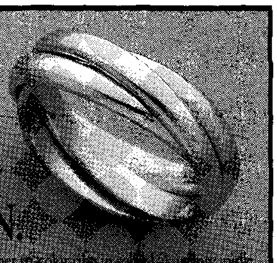

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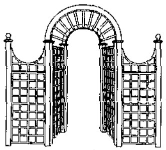

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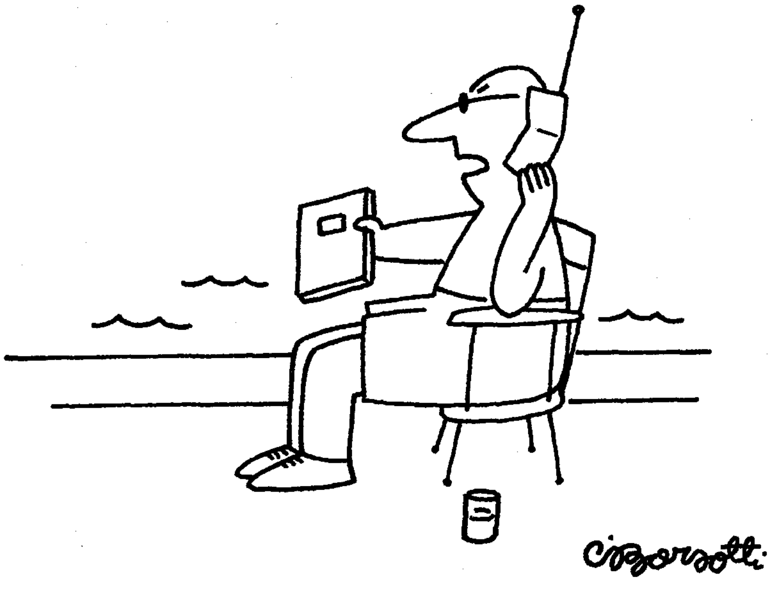
nights seem hotter in Roseau than the nights in Mahaut; Madame Labatte is so very kind to me, she saves, as a special treat for me, a part of the fish that I love; the part of the fish that I love is the head—and this was something my father would not have known, something I had no reason to believe he wished to know. I sent him these letters without fear. I never received a direct reply, but he sent word to me through the letters he wrote to Monsieur Labatte; he always hoped I was getting along in a good way and he wished me well.

My friendship—for it was that—with Madame Labatte continued to grow. She was always alone, and that was true even when she was with others; she was so alone. She thought that she made me sit with her as she sat on the veranda and sewed or just looked out blankly at the scene in front of her, but I wanted to sit with her. I was enjoying this new experience, the experience of a silence full of expectation and desire; she wanted something from me, I could tell that, and I longed for the moment to come, the moment when I would know just what it was she wanted from me. It never crossed my mind that I would refuse her.

One day, without any preparation, she gave me a beautiful dress that she no longer wore. It still fit her, but she no longer wore it. As I was trying on the dress I could hear her thoughts: she was thinking of her youth, of the person she was when she first wore the dress she had just given me, and of the things she had wanted, the things she had not received, the emptiness of her whole life. All this filled the air in the room we were in; the bed in which she slept with her husband was in this room. My own thoughts answered hers: "You were foolish, you should not have let all these things happen to you, it is your own fault." I was without mercy in my judgment and my merciless thoughts, my condemnations filled my head with a slow roar until I thought I would faint, and then this thought came upon me, slowly saving me from doing so: she wants to make a gift of me to her husband; she wants to give me to him; she hopes I do not mind.

I was standing in this room before her—my clothes coming off, my clothes going on, naked, clothed—but the vulnerability I felt was not of the body; it was of the spirit, of the soul. To communicate so intimately with someone, to speak silently to someone and yet to be understood more clearly than if you had shouted at the top of your voice, was something I did not experience with anyone ever again in my life. I took the dress from her. I did not wear it; I would never wear it; I only took it and kept it for a while.

The inevitable is no less a shock because it is inevitable. I was sitting, late one day, in a small shaded area behind the house where some flowers were planted, but this place could not be called a garden, for not much care was applied to it; the sun had not yet set completely, it was just that moment when the creatures of the day are quiet but the creatures of the night have not quite found their voice. It was that time of day when all that you have lost is heaviest in your mind: your mother, if you have lost her; your home, if you have lost it; the voices of people who might have loved you but did not; the places in which something good, something you cannot forget, happened to you. I did not wear undergarments anymore—I found them uncomfortable—and as I sat there I touched various parts of my body, sometimes absent-mindedly, sometimes with a purpose in mind. I was running the fingers of my left hand through the small thick patch of hair between my legs and thinking of my life as I had lived it so far, fifteen years of it now, and I saw that Monsieur Labatte was standing not far off, looking at me. He did not move away in embarrassment and I, too, did not run away in embarrassment. We held each other's gaze. I removed my fingers from between my legs and brought them up to my face; I wanted to smell myself. It was the end of the day, and my odor was quite powerful. This scene of me placing my hands between my legs and then enjoying the smell of myself and Monsieur Labatte watching me lasted until the usual sudden falling of the dark, and so when he came closer to me and asked me to remove my clothes, I said, quite sure of myself, knowing what it was I wanted, that it was too dark, and I could not see.



"Damn it, Eddie, you told me this script was stupid."

He took me to the room in which he counted his money, the money that was only some of the money that he had. It was a dark room, and so he kept a small lamp always lighted in it. I took off my clothes, and he took off his clothes also. He was the first man I had ever seen unclothed, and this surprised me: the body of a man is not what makes him desirable; it is what his body might make you feel when it touches you that is the thrill, anticipating what his body will make you feel. And then the reality was better than the anticipation, and the world had a wholeness to it, a wholeness with a current of pure pleasure running through it. But when I first saw him, saw his hands hanging at his sides—not yet caressing my hair, not yet inside me, not yet bringing the small risings that were my breasts toward his mouth, not yet opening my mouth wider to place his tongue even deeper in my mouth—and I saw the limp folds of the flesh on his stomach, the hardening flesh between his legs, I was surprised at how unbeautiful he was all by himself, just standing there, and it was anticipation that kept me enthralled. And the force of him inside me, inevitable as it was, again came as a shock, a long sharp line of pain that then washed over me with the broadness of a wave, and then another wave; and in response to each I made a cry that was the same cry, a cry of sadness—for without making of it something it really was not, I was not the same person that I had been before.

He was not a man of love, and I did not need him to be. When he was through with me and I with him, he lay on top of me, breathing indifferently; his mind was on other things. I could see that on a small shelf behind his back he had lined up many coins, turned heads up; they all bore the face of a king.

In the room where I slept, the room with the dirt floor, I poured water into a small tin basin and washed off the thin crust of blood that had dried down the inside of my legs. I knew why it was there; I knew what had just happened to me. I wanted to see what I looked like but I could not, I did not have a looking glass of my own. I felt myself, and my skin felt smooth, as though it had just been oiled and freshly polished. The place between my legs ached, my breasts ached, my lips ached, my wrists ached; when he had not wanted me to touch him, he had placed his own large hands over my wrists and kept them pinned to the floor; when my cries had distracted him he had clamped my lips shut with his own mouth; and it was through all the parts of my body that ached that I relived the deep pleasure I had just experienced. When I awoke the next morning, I did not feel that I had slept at all; I felt as if I had only lost consciousness, and I picked up where I had left off in my ache of pleasure.

It had rained during the night, and in the morning it did not stop, and in the evening after the morning it did not stop; the rain did not stop for many, many days. It fell with such force and for such a long time that it appeared it would change the face and the destiny of the world, the world of outpost Roseau, and that after it stopped, nothing would be the same; not the ground itself that we walked on, not even the outcome of a quarrel. But that was not so; after the rain stopped, the waters formed streams, the streams ran into rivers, the rivers ran into the sea; the ground retained its shape. I was the one who was in a state of upheaval. I would not remain the same, even I could see that. The respectable, the predictable—such roles were not to be my own destiny.

During the days and nights that the rain fell, I could not keep to my routine: make my own breakfast, perform some household tasks in the main house, where Madame and Monsieur lived, walk to my school, where all the students were female, and shun their childish company, return home, run errands for Madame, and returning home again to perform more household chores, wash my own clothes and generally take care of my own self and my things. I could not attend to any of that; the rain made it impossible.

I was standing in the middle of a smaller version of the larger deluge; it was coming through the roof of my small house, which was made of tin. I had the same sensations, and I was not used to them yet, but the rain was familiar. A knock at the door, a command; the door shook open. She came to rescue me: she knew how I must be suffering in the wet, she had been in the kitchen and from there she could hear my suffering, my suffering caused by this unexpected deluge, this unconscionable downpour; to be alone in it would be the cause of much suffering for me; she could already hear me suffering so. But I was not making a sound of complaint, only the soft sighs of satisfaction remembered. She took me into the house and she made me coffee. It was hot and strong, with fresh milk he had brought that morning from some cows he kept not far from the house. He was not in the house now; he had come and he had gone away. I spent the days with her; I spent the nights with him.

It was not an arrangement made with words, it could not be made with words. On that day she showed me how to make him a cup of coffee; he liked to drink coffee with so strong a flavor that it overwhelmed anything that anyone wanted to put in it. She said this: "The taste is so strong you can put anything in it, he would never know." When we were alone we spoke to each other in French patois, the language of the captive, the il-

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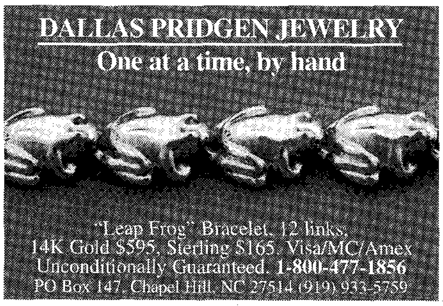

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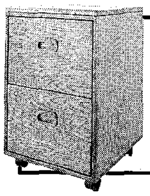

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legitimate; we never spoke of what we were doing and we never spoke for long; we spoke of the things in front of us and then we were silent. A silence had preceded the instructions about how to make coffee, and a silence followed it. I did not say to her, I do not want to make him coffee, I shall never make him coffee, I do not need to know how to make this man coffee, no man shall ever drink coffee from my hands made in that way! I did not say this. She washed my hair and rinsed it with a tea she had made from nettles, she combed it lovingly, admiring its liveliness (for my hair then looked like a nest of snakes, all about to strike), she applied oil she had rendered from castor beans to my scalp, she plaited it into two braids, just the way I always wore it; she then bathed me and gave me another dress that she used to wear when she was a young woman. The dress fit me perfectly, and I felt most uncomfortable in it; I could not wait to remove it and put on my own clothes again.

We sat on two chairs, not facing each other, speaking without words, exchanging thoughts. She told me of her life, of the time she first went swimming: it was a Sunday, she had been to church, and she went swimming and almost drowned, and never did it again; to this day, many years after (it had happened when she was a girl), she never goes into the water of the sea, she only looks at it; and to my silent question, if when she looks at the sea, she regrets that she is not now part of its everlastingness, she did not answer, she could not answer. So much sadness had overwhelmed her life; the moment she met her Monsieur Labatte—she called him Monsieur Labatte then, she called him Monsieur Labatte later, she calls him "him" now—she wanted him to possess her. She cannot remember the color of the day; he did not notice her, and he did not wish to possess her; his arms were powerful; his lips were powerful; he walked with a purpose, even when he was going nowhere. She bound him to her with a spell; she wanted to graft herself onto him. She wanted only to have him, but he would not be had, he would not be contained, and to want what you will never have, to know too late that you will never have it, is the beginning of a life overwhelmed with sadness. She wanted a child, but her womb was like a sieve—it would not contain a child then, and it would not contain anything now; it lay shrivelled inside her, and perhaps her face mirrored it, shrivelled, dried, like a fruit that has lost all its juice.

Did I value my youth? Did I treasure the newness that was me, sitting next to her in a chair? I did not, how could I; in my column of losses, youth had not yet been entered; in my loss column was my mother. Love was not yet in my loss column: I had not yet been loved, and I could not tell if the way she had combed my hair was an expression of love. I could not tell if the way she had gently bathed me—passing the piece of cloth over my breasts, between the front and back of my legs, down my thighs, down my calves—was love; I could not tell if wanting me dry when I was wet, if wanting me fed when I was hungry was love. I had not had love yet, it was not in my column of gain, so it could not be in my column of loss.

The rain fell, and we no longer heard it; we would only hear its absence. My days were full of silence, yet crowded with words; my nights were full of sighs, soft and loud with agony and pleasure. I would call out his name, Jack, sometimes like an epithet, sometimes like a prayer. We were never the three of us together; she saw him in one room, I saw him in another. He never spoke to me. He was behaving in a way he knew well, and I was following a feeling I had, I was acting from instinct, and the feeling I had, the instinct, was new to me. She heard us, though she never let me know that she did; she could hear us.

She had wanted a child, I could hear her say that. I was not a child, I could no longer be a child; she could hear me say that. But again she wanted something from me: she wanted a child I might have, and I did not let her know that I heard that, or that this vision she had—of a child inside me, eventually in her arms—would hang in the air, like a ghost, for my eyes only, but I would never see it. It would go away and come back, this ghost of me with a child inside me; I turned my back to it, my ears grew deaf to it, my heart would not beat. She was stitching me a garment from beautiful old clothes she had kept from the different times in her life—the happy times, the sad times; it was a shroud made of memories, and how she wished to weave me into its seams, its many seams, how hard she tried! But with each click of the thimble striking the needle, I made an escape. Her frustration and my satisfaction were palpable.

It was not possible for me to become a schoolgirl again, only I did not know this right away. The climate remained the same; the weather changed. Monsieur went away, and I did not see the counting room for a while. In each corner and along the sides of the floor he had small mountains of farthings; on a table he had piled other coins—shillings and florins; he had so many coins all over the room, in stacks, that when the lamp was lit, they made the room brighter. Sometimes, in the night, I would awake to find him counting his money, over and over, as if he did not know how much he really had, or as if counting would make a difference. He never offered any of it to me; he knew I did not want it. The room was not cold or warm or suffocating, but it was not ideal. I did not want to spend the rest of my life in it; I did not want to spend the rest of my life with the person who owned such a room.

He was not at home, and my nights then were spent in my room off the kitchen. My days were spent in a schoolhouse. This life of mine in the school had never offered me the satisfaction I was told it would; it only filled me with questions that were not answered; it only filled me with anger. I could not like what it would lead to: a humiliation so permanent that it replaced your own skin. And your own name, whatever it might be, was not the gateway to who you really were, and you could not ever say to yourself, "My name is Xuela Claudette Desvarieus." This was my mother's name, and I cannot say it was her real name, for in a life like hers or mine what is a real name? My own name is her name, Xuela Claudette, but in the place of the Desvarieus is Richardson, which is my father's name; but who are these people Claudette, Desvarieus, and Richardson? To look into it can only fill you with despair. For the name of any one person is at once their history recapitulated and abbreviated, and on declaring it that person holds himself high or low, and the person hearing it holds the declarer high or low. My mother was placed outside the gates of a convent when she was perhaps a day old, by a woman believed to be her own mother; she was wrapped in pieces of clean old cloth, and the name Xuela was written on these pieces of cloth; it was written in ink, the color of which was indigo, in a dye rendered from a plant. She was not discovered because she had been crying (even as a just born baby she did not draw attention to herself); she was found by a nun who was on her way to wreak more havoc in the lives of a vanishing people, and her name was Claudette Desvarieus. She named my mother after herself, and how the name Xuela survived I do not know, but my father gave it to me when she died, just after I was born. He loved her, and I do not know how much of the person that he was then, sentimental and tender, survived in him.

This moment of my life was an idyll of peace and contentment, of innocent young womanhood during the day, which was spent in a large room with other young women, all of them the product of legitimate unions, for this school, founded by missionary followers of John Wesley, did not admit children born outside of marriages. This, apart from everything else, kept the school very small, because most children in Roseau were born outside of a marriage. So I spent the day surrounded by the eventually defeated, the eventually bitter, by the dull hum of the voices of these girls, whose bodies, already a source of anxiety and shame, were draped in a blue sack made from coarse cotton: a uniform. And then my nights of silences and sighs, all an idyll: its end I could see, and I did not know how or when this end would come, but I could see it all the same. This thought did not fill me with dread.

I became very sick. I was with child, but I did not know it; I had no experience with the symptoms of such a state and so did not immediately know what was happening to me. It was Madame Labatte who told me what was the matter with me. I had just vomited everything I had eaten and I felt that I would die, and so I called out her name. "Lise!" I said, not "Madame Labatte"; she had put me on her bed to lie down; she was lying next to me, holding me in her arms. She said I was with child. She said it in English. Her voice had tenderness in it and sympathy, and she said it again and again, that I was having a child, and then she sounded quite happy, smoothing down the hair on my head, rubbing my cheek with the back of her hand, as if I were a baby, too, in a state of irritation which I could not articulate and her touch would prove soothing to me.

Her words, though, struck a terror in me. At first I did not believe her, and then I believed her completely, and instantly felt that if there was a child in me I would expel it through the sheer force of my will. I willed it out of me, day after day I did this, but it did not come out. From deep in her underarms I could smell a perfume, which was made from the juice of a flower, and this smell would fill up the room, fill up my nostrils, would go down into my stomach and come out through my mouth in waves of vomiting, the taste of it slowly strangling me. I believed then that I would die, and perhaps because I no longer had a future I began to want one very much. But what such a thing could be then for me, I did not know; for I was standing in a black hole, and the other alternative was another black hole, and this other black hole was one I did not know. I chose the one I did not know.

One day I was alone, still lying in Lise's bed, and she had left me alone. I got up and walked into Monsieur Labatte's counting room and reaching into a small crocus bag that had in it only shillings, I removed one handful of these coins. I walked to the house of a woman who is dead now, and when she opened her door to me I placed my handful of shillings in her hands and looked in her face. I did not say a word. I did not know her real name; she was called Sange-Sange, but that was not her real name. She gave me a cup full of a thick black syrup to drink and then led me to a small hole in the dirt floor where I could lie down. For four days I stayed there, my body a volcano of pain, and nothing happened, and then, for four days after that, blood flowed from between my legs slowly and steadily like an eternal spring. And then it stopped. The pain was like nothing I had ever imagined before; it was as if it defined pain itself, and all other pain became only a reference to it, an imitation of it, an aspiration to it. I was a new person then. I knew things I had not known before, I knew things that you could only know if you had been through what I had just been through. I had carried my own life in my own hands. ♦

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THE UNFINISHED

The masterpiece of modern German literature, in a new translation.

BY GEORGE STEINER

THE Anglo-Saxon temperament has a weakness for innocence, even a touch of grossness, in its novelists. It bridles at intellectuality, at the application to fiction of systematic philosophy. The teller of tales—of sophisticated, psychologically refined tales—is one thing. The logician, the metaphysician, the mind trained in philosophy or science, quite another. The term "thinker," crucial to European and Russian culture, rings awkwardly in Anglo-American. It savors of cold coffee cups in what was Central Europe or of Gauloises on the Left Bank. This is particularly so when the term is attached to a novelist. And there *is* more than a grain of perception in this prejudice. The intelligence in great art and literature is something of a mystery. Such intelligence is obviously formidable in its capacity to organize, to edge out of common focus, to re-create our reading of the world. But the preëminent feat in fiction—the presentation of rounded, autonomous characters, of situations both specific and suddenly universal—can occur in works neither formally cultured nor cerebrally intelligent. Indeed, an enigma of naïveté, even of physical immediacy, often generates literary or visual invention: do not listen to a great sculptor or painter on politics or aesthetics; watch his or her hands. The wisdom of numerous classic novelists is of a peculiarly visceral, instinctive order. Their work is shaped at depths below conscious articulation, let alone reflection—depths that are inaccessible to the rest of us. All this makes more fascinating the exceptions: the writers of fiction who are also major, systematic intellects.

Robert Musil around 1930, when the first volume of his novel was hailed as "the book" after "Ulysses."

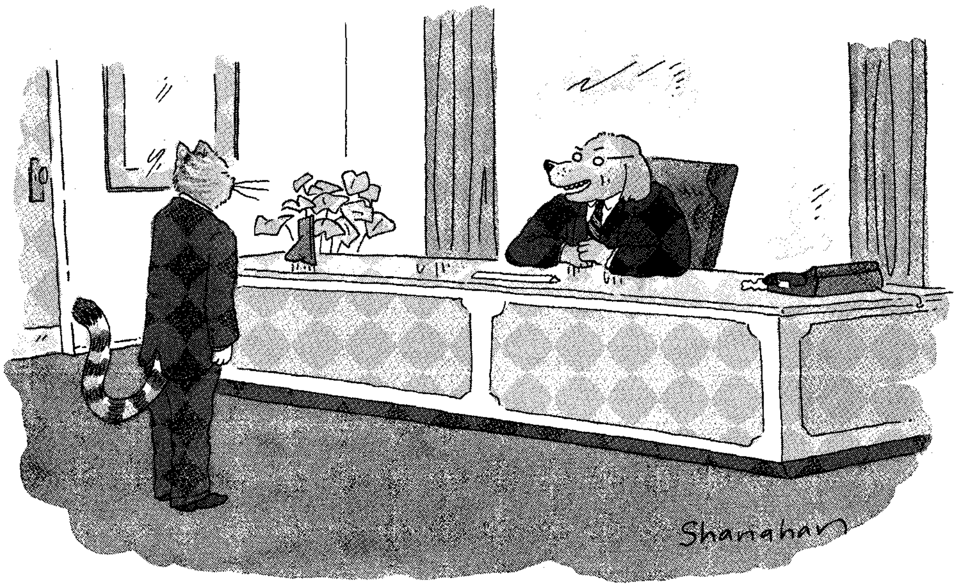
PAUL HAMLYN

There have been two in the twentieth century: Marcel Proust and Robert Musil. There are, of course, other writers who present themselves as candidates. Elias Canetti, a fervent admirer of Musil, is a special case inasmuch as he produced only one novel, and at an early age. Thomas Mann carried within himself a fair portion of Western culture, and his narrative genius was manifest. But there is in that towering mastery a perennial conservatism; what he had was an expository brilliance in the adaptation of already available philosophies, such as those of Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, and Freud. Henry James's critique of society and his anatomy of human relations are of the finest. But they are those of a master impressionist, and he more or less uneasily left philosophical argument to his brother. The political instincts and the feel for the turbulence of history in an André Malraux, a Graham Greene, and a Saul Bellow are acute. Yet we would not look to these witnesses for any original contribution to philosophy, to the development of logic or epistemology in any ordered—let alone systematized—way. Joyce mimes ideas, parodies them, dramatizes them, sets them to incomparable verbal music; he does not have them. By contrast, if the notion of literature should itself disappear, Proust's place in intellectual life would remain eminent. He is, after Aristotle and Kant, one of the seminal thinkers on aesthetics, on the theoretical and pragmatic relations between form and meaning. His analyses of the psychosomatic texture of human emotions, of the phenomenology of experience, are of compelling philosophical interest. Even in his lifetime, it became a cliché to set "Proust on time" beside Einstein and the new physics. "À la Recherche du Temps Perdu" is interwoven with motifs of epistemology, philosophy of art (including music), and ethical debate which nevertheless have their own independent status. Only Musil provides a counterpart.

This is, at an obvious level, a matter of biography. Musil was a highly trained and qualified mechanical engineer with a keen grasp of mathematics and mathematical logic. His thesis bore on the technical aspects of Ernst Mach's philosophy of physics. (Einstein shared with him an engagement with Mach.) From 1903 to 1908, Musil was also occupied with the study of experimental clinical psychology and of theories of behavior. There is hardly a page in his immense œuvre—so much of it as yet unpublished in English—that does not argue, by precept and example, for the radical unison of the philosophical and the poetic. (The German *Dichtung* makes this symbiosis easier to express.) For Musil, thought—be it mathematical, analytic, discursive, or aesthetic—is form. To think rigorously is to shape rigorously: the concordance between genre and content should be as logical and as inevitable in a novella or a play as it is in the blueprint of a machine tool or in an algebraic proof. There is nothing cold or mandarin about this heroic conviction. It gives to Musil's stories and to "The Man Without Qualities," which has been newly translated by Sophie Wilkins and Burton Pike (Knopf; $60), a subtle lustre, a summons to adult response, an imaginative authority of the rarest force. Musil honors his readers by the demands he makes of them.

For an American public in the nineteen-nineties, they may prove onerous. Musil grounds the world of his analytic imaginings wholly in that of *Kakanien*, the lavatory term he invented to designate the Austro-Hungarian dual monarchy. His texts swarm with allusions, sometimes covert and sometimes oblique, to Austrian politics and society, to the philosophical-sociological debates in Vienna before the First World War, to incidents of criminality or fashion in the city of Mahler and Freud, and to the diverse styles of rhetoric and jargon in fin-de-siècle Vienna-Budapest-Prague. No less than Joyce, Musil constructs the fabric of his vast design around minutiae of exact local reference. But his motive is not Joyce's. The pressure of abstraction on Musil was such—the temptation of the philosophical essay or epistemological investigation was so constant—that he strove to give to his fiction the concreteness of locality. It is the unresolved tension between the alternatives of the systematic and the poetic, the scientific and the literary—or, rather, a staunch refusal to acknowledge that they *are* divergent alternatives—that confers on his writings their unsettling power.

Both the power and the disturbance emanate from his early masterpiece, "Young Törless," published in 1906. The German title tells of *Verwirrungen*—of the maddening disorders, confusions, vertigos—that afflict the adolescent hero in the erotic-sadistic atmosphere of the military academy. Musil himself was familiar with this scene. His portrait of the artist as a young cadet belongs to a widespread genre—one that extends from "Tom Brown's School Days" all the way to "The Catcher in the Rye." But Musil's portrait has a much higher purpose. Consciously or not, Musil has already sensed his arch-theme: that of psychological, sexual, and social disorder in the doomed culture of Central Europe. Already, the clairvoyant in him is unmistakable: the episodes of ritual humiliation—of sadomasochistic practices in this tight-buttoned hell, of choosing a scapegoat with "alien" traits—anticipate, almost unbearably, events to come. "Die Versuchung der Stillen Veronika"—where *Versuchung*, "temptation," evokes *Versuch*, a "trial," or "attempt"—was completed in 1911. It may well be the single greatest short story in German. (There is more than one element of inspired kitsch in Mann's "Death in Venice.") Behind this uncannily charged miniature lies the less concentrated canvas of Goethe's "Elective Affinities." Musil's tale and Goethe's novel depict a shift toward reflexes within us which we register in even the most direct of erotic encounters. The title of the short book in which Musil's story is included, "Vereinigungen"—meaning "unions," or "concordances"—is bitterly ironic: there are none to be found. It is in sexual encounters that solitude is sharpest, that the imagined wealth of remembered, alternative, or illusory possibilities devastates the pretended truth of the moment. Men and women sleep not with each other but with the memories, the regrets, the hopes of unions yet to come. Our adulteries are internal; they deepen our aloneness.



"I'm not worried about you, Henley. You'll land on your feet."

Even beyond Proust's, Robert Musil's sensibility was hermaphroditic. He could focus on the unspoken or subliminal current of feminine consciousness, on women's speech to themselves, with an exactitude, a caring precision, that no other modern writer has quite matched. "The Temptation of Quiet Veronica" and its companion piece "The Perfecting of Love," concise as they are, required years of strained labor. They demonstrate, as do the novellas gathered in "Three Women" (1924), that it is possible for an exceptional intellect and imagination to pass through the Freudian tunnel and emerge into a light altogether more scrupulous in its reading of human enclosedness. Had we only these shorter fictions, the occasional lectures (such as the one on stupidity, delivered in the teeth of Nazi Vienna), and the voluminous notebooks, diaries, shards of literary-social criticism and satire, Musil's place in literary history would be considerable. As it is, these *opera minora* seem to stand in the bright shade of the colossus: "Der Mann ohne Eigenschaften." Translated into English, "Eigenschaften" has, unavoidably, been rendered as "qualities." It is a rendering that omits crucial connotations of selfness, of singular appropriation to oneself, almost of "self-possession," with all its philosophical-moral-economic attributes. "Qualities" lets drop the decisive analogies with the ontological-psychological investigations into the ego not only in Freud but in Husserl and Heidegger. "The Man Whose 'I' Is in Search of His 'Me' " would be an absurdly awkward paraphrase, but it might be more exact.

When Robert Musil died suddenly in Geneva, on April 15, 1942, he was in exile (his wife was Jewish) and was virtually destitute. His publications were, in the main, pulped or out of print, and many of his papers, left behind in Vienna, were destroyed in the war. His magnum opus, on which he was working only moments prior to his death, lay hopelessly unfinished. Musil's very name seemed to ring a bell—and then a muted one—only with a few eminent contemporaries, such as Mann and Broch; with a handful of fellow-refugees; and with the bureaucrats in various relief organizations, who had become increasingly weary of his desolate applications for help. Today, however, there is an academic-critical Musil industry. A series of monographs devoted to his work has now passed twenty volumes. Already, the bibliography of scholarly commentary is vast, and theses are cascading. The claim that "The Man Without Qualities," even as we have it, towers over modern fiction in the German language is near to being a banality.

Yet there is a good deal that remains confused. The first volume of the novel, comprising a hundred and twenty-three chapters, appeared in 1930. Sales were hardly massive, but critical attention was immediate and almost entirely positive. Critical consensus held it to be the book after "Ulysses." In 1933, however, when the thirty-eight chapters that make up the second tome were published, few reviewers took note. This lack of attention was due only in part to Hitler's assumption of power in Germany and to prompt Nazi denunciations of Musil as an obscurantist, decadent pessimist, useless to readers in the new dawn. Even sympathetic critics were baffled by the second volume's myriad complexity of narrative strands, by the palpable indecisions of structure and tone. What followed were twenty chapters, which Musil revised in galleys between 1937 and 1938 but then withdrew from his publisher, and the

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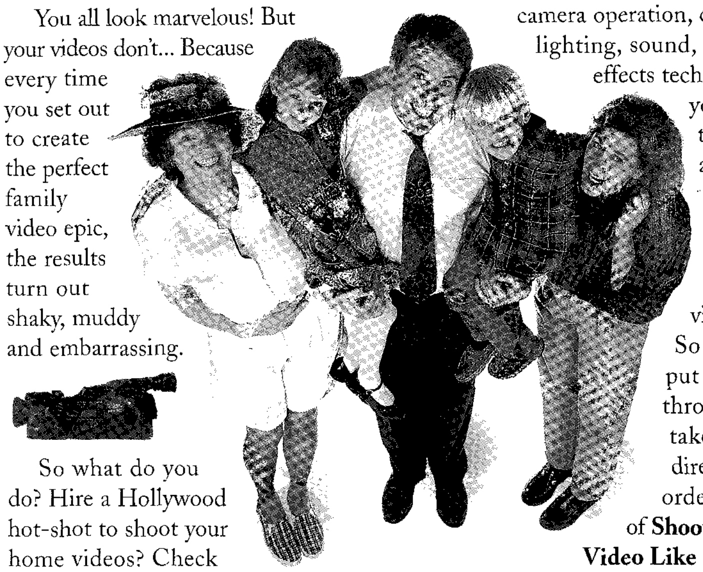

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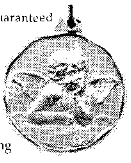

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enormous *Nachlass*—the posthumous material, comprising, in different Musil archives, some twenty thousand pages. The Knopf claim, emblazoned on the dust jacket of the new edition, that this translation is "the first in English to provide a *complete* text" is simply not true. There can be no "complete" text of a work that remains drastically incomplete; quite different editorial arrangements are and will continue to be possible. What we have here is a translation, by Sophie Wilkins, breaking off with Chapter 38 of Part 3, followed by some six hundred further pages from the *Nachlass*, dating from 1920 to 1942, and selected and translated by Burton Pike. Particularly with regard to the first two panels of the triptych, this enterprise is essentially based on the German edition issued by Rowohlt in 1978. Though the Rowohlt Musil supersedes previous attempts, it is itself necessarily incomplete and selective as to posthumous matter. Unsurprisingly, it has provoked scholarly-critical doubts. Despite thirty-four megabytes of data on CD-ROM, which appeared in 1992, there can be no definitive "The Man Without Qualities."

As is well known, Musil sets out to chronicle, to elucidate critically, the death of Europe and its culture. (Spengler was a significant influence.) The philosophical epic begins in August, 1913, exactly a year before the catastrophe. If there is a structural keel, it is Musil's acidly ironic invention—though an invention based on fact—of the "Parallel Campaign." The reign of Emperor William II of Germany would reach its thirtieth glorious year in 1918. Preparations for this august event were actually under way in Berlin. How, then, could Austria do less than celebrate, also in 1918, the seventieth anniversary of Emperor Franz Joseph's accession to the throne—surely a nobler and more blessed event? The committee that was assembled to study and develop this inspired proposal functions as the pivot of the novel, bringing many of its main characters into ideological, social, political, and sexual interaction. The ultimate fatuousness of the project, given the as yet unknown realities of 1918, and the deep-lying hypocrisies and illusions that it exposes serve Musil as a touchstone for his encompassing thesis of spiritual decay.

This thesis is argued further in a number of ancillary plots, each prodigal enough to form a novel in its own right. Moosbrugger, the sadistic sex murderer, fascinates the elegant, emancipated circles of mundane Vienna. His crimes are, in one sense, enactments of the fantasies of the disturbed, Nietzschean Clarisse (whose androgynous impulses mirror something central in Musil). Dr. Paul Arnheim—based, in part, on the German-Jewish statesman and thinker Walther Rathenau—exhibits those gifts for detachment and for ironic vision which were at once the glory of the Central European life of the mind and a symptom of its incapacity for direct political action in the face of the inhuman. As in Balzac or Proust, the cast in Musil is large. It spans every social condition, from slums to *palais*, from bohemia to military eminence. Musil's combinatorial techniques, especially in Volume I, are awesome.

AN EXERCISE IN SADNESS

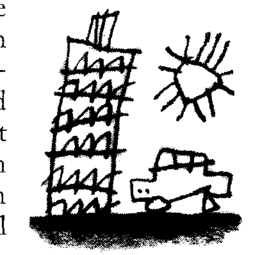
Steichen's roses have faces in them
I've seen on a few sad occasions.
Occasions for sadness can be found
anywhere. Now I'm aware in this
intuitive way of the absence at my
back. How do I explain it? I lie
in bed, alone. I turn over to my side.
No hand moves between my shoulders.
No lap molds itself to the elbow
of my knees. The smell of me,
me alone, rises warmly from
under the covers. I toss and turn.
I turn wearily towards the lack of you,
hold still as if to hold you still.

—Gabrielle Glancy

When Agathe—the sister of "the man without qualities," Ulrich—enters the novel, what was previously a kaleidoscope narrows to a laser. The siblings have scarcely seen each other since childhood. Agathe is drifting away from a second marriage. Ulrich's sexual affairs have, like Musil's, been numerous and instructive, but they have left him disposable and at the surface of himself. Agathe is a vibrant sleepwalker, who takes care not to exceed the sheltering distances that separate her from awakening. The philosophical armature of her somnambular élan is set out by the novelist. It is that of the cult of authentic life, of finally declared feeling, at whatever private or social risk; it relates Nietzsche to Bergson, and is dramatized in writers as otherwise diverse as Henry James (witness the hymn to "only living" in "The Ambassadors") and D. H. Lawrence. The secret of recovered life lies, in part, in a knowing retrieval of childhood. Proust is the supreme strategist of this spiralling return. Ulrich and Agathe find themselves journeying homeward, to the "unsealing of a crypt" that is also a cradle or a box of magical toys, masks, mementos. The other motion of recovery, of authentication in the face of the constraints of the social-normative order, is that of the quantum leap. "Leap" is the wrong word, in that the forward thrust can be one of almost impalpable nuance and gradations. But there is a *salto mortale* nevertheless—a step into the void.

"The Man Without Qualities" is the narrative-psychological apex of an aesthetic of brother-sister relations—an aesthetic that takes its modern guise in Byron, in Shelley, in Baudelaire's incantation to *mon enfant*, *ma sœur*. Specifically, Musil follows on the mythology and, one can almost say, the politics of love between brother and sister set out in Wagner's "Ring." Musil presses toward a new intensity of metaphysical and ethical valuation the ancient intuition that a brother's passion for his sister, a sister's for her brother, can alone satisfy the ache of eros for total oneness. Love between organic strangers, however vehement, cannot abolish the paradox of solitude, of the unbridgeable. Love between those whom blood and inheritance conjoin fuses the needs of narcissism (self-love) with those of total intimacy with another. “Now I know what you are: you are my self-love!” And this very insight, being communicable, defies aloneness.

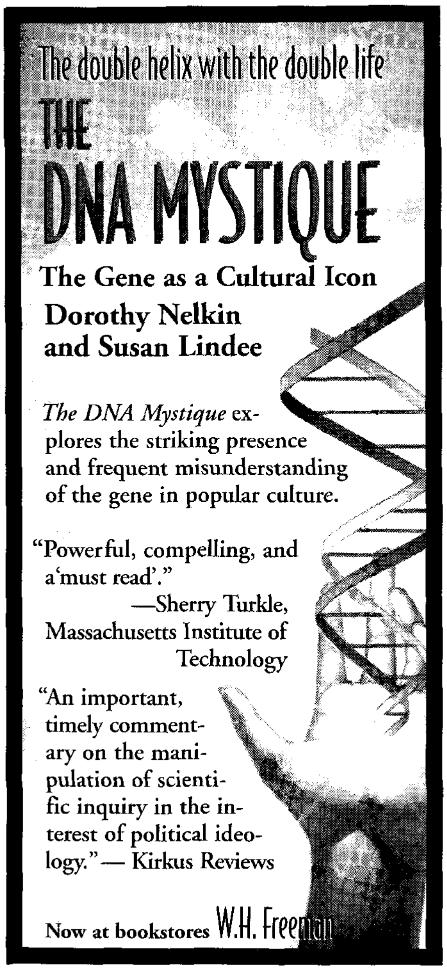
In retrospect, the entirety of Musil's genius—the rigor of psychological notation, the eerie depths of the novellas, the ability to make intimate detail representative of philosophical argument and social crisis—can be seen as a prelude to the Ulrich-Agathe chapters. Nothing in modern literature, except the saga of the Narrator and Albertine in Proust, comes close. Step by step, Musil unfolds the hesitant ecstasy of soul and spirit which inspires the Siamese twins as they probe the complex wonder of mutual rediscovery. They proclaim an elective affinity so unguarded as to make of them twins of different gender and age, but twins nonetheless. Gender, moreover, flickers uncertainly. There is something radically boyish in Agathe's lithe charm, in her smiling cynicism, whereas what Ulrich feels crowding upon him is not only his sister's femininity but his own, now liberated from conventional restraints. Within a shared idiom, simultaneously impressionistic, encoded, and strangely resonant with the metaphysical discourse on eros as we know it from Plato or from Nietzsche, “dream” and charged immediacy alternate. Is theirs a joint self-delusion, an infinitely gentle folie à deux? Agathe says, “But it does happen in one's sleep! There you do sometimes see yourself transformed into something else. Or meet yourself as a man. And then you're much kinder to him than you are to yourself. You'll probably say that these are sexual dreams, but I think they are much older.”



Agathe's intimation of a primal archetype is given shape, famously, in the “garden episodes” from the chapters withdrawn by Musil in 1938 and still unpublished at his death. Their setting is deliberately Edenic. Theological fantasies play in Ulrich's mind even as the air is toying with Agathe's hair—with her “blond head like light on light against the sky.” What if God Himself would devalue the world if He were to come closer to it by even the tiniest step? This esoteric notion is a figuration of Ulrich's unease about the finality of his love for Agathe. “A deep moat from some other world seemed to enclose them both in a nowhere world of their own.” But, precisely because “it is imagination” (one of Musil's key doctrines), morality continues to exercise its questioning role. The closer the twins are to each other, the more demanding the conditions of possibility. An unexamined love is not worth living. “Moonbeams by Sunlight,” the title of Chapter 46, aims at suggesting something of the countercurrents, the “reflections,” in both the optical and the psychological vein, that attach to this pas de deux. (The hint of choreography, of an intricate but also self-ironizing pavane, is compelling.)

These chapters are the cruellest of tests for any translator. The closest analogy in English might be the sections miming Eden in Henry James's “The Golden Bowl.” But with a constant difference: in Musil the analytic-philosophical lineaments are persistently vital. Perhaps one should think of Santayana's fiction, but at a much higher pitch of authority. It would be otiose to anatomize this or that passage of the Pike rendering in the word-for-word light of the German original. A translation of this scope needs to be lived with. What we are given here manifestly supersedes previous attempts. It may well turn out to be the best Musil available to an English-language readership. The comic strands, notably in a personage such as Tuzzi or Diotima, are strikingly recaptured. Passing vignettes show Wilkins' virtuosity: “Then it occurred to him that one could just as well say that a woolen blanket resembled a night in October. He felt a gentle uncertainty on his skin and drew Bonadea closer.” Or the delicious sketch of Diotima reading, brushing back her sumptuous black hair from her forehead, “which gave her a logical air.” Grasp the full connotations of the apposition of these two words, and you will be at the heart of Musil.

Why the incompletion? This, of course, is the “Musil question.” Why the incapacity or unwillingness to choose between alternative endings when these are more or less fully set out in the vastness of the posthumous papers? Material circumstances mattered, undoubtedly. Musil's *misère*, his pariahdom, the disappearance of his name and works from a Europe whose collapse into barbarism he had so acutely foreseen made him feel that the formal completion of his labors, let alone their publication in any conventionally accomplished form, was a wholly unrealistic prospect. More-



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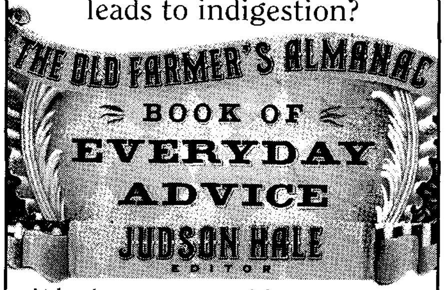

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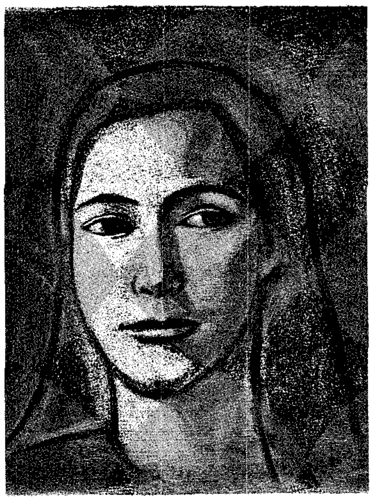
over, what meaning would his own reduced existence have if "The Man Without Qualities" were out of his hands? (The parallels with Proust are evident.) But it can also be argued that incompletion is of the essence, that it was latent in the celebrated initial sentence about the barometric pressure hanging low over the Atlantic and moving inexorably eastward. Time has no stop; nor does human history, even where it is apocalyptic. There are no last judgments—only attempts, as in differential calculus, to get nearer to the truth, to the finally incommensurable. Musil explored and pondered a finale of incest for Ulrich and Agathe. Rightly, he balked at the simplemindedness, at the novelettish flavor, of any such solution. Already, they cohabit far beyond the flesh. Musil was familiar with "The Magic Mountain," and was himself an ex-combatant who was ascetically at home in uniform; and so he could easily have closed on a scene of world war. But one senses that Mann's precedent did not convince him. Even the horrors of 1914-18 had proved to be only an unfinished chapter of Europe's tragedy. Thus there is something strangely right about the "interminability" of "The Man Without Qualities" and the aleatory challenge posed by the archive, containing, as it does, pages of the highest interest and the highest art. Completion might have diminished the unbounded life of the torso. ◆

GOTHIC REVIVAL

A first novel brings Northern manners to a Southern tradition.

BY CLAIRE MESSUD



Katherine Mosby

TOM CURRY

SMALL-TOWN Southern society between the wars is a territory that has been so frequently covered by American writers that a fictional Southern town now hovers in the literary imagination, peopled by the grotesques of Faulkner, McCullers, and O'Connor. Katherine Mosby sets her first novel, "Private Altars" (Random House; $21), in just such a place. Winsville, West Virginia, is at once small-minded and strange, home to—among others—a drunken doctor, a harelipped landlady, and black servants with names like Fayette and Hegemony. It is no mean challenge to avoid banality in terrain where eccentricity has become a cliché, but Mosby succeeds by disrupting the town's equilibrium with another type of eccentric altogether. The unlikely behavior of her protagonist, a sophisticated Northern beauty named Vienna Daniels, serves to unite Winsville in the conviction of its own normality.

Vienna arrives in Winsville in 1926, the prized bride of a dashing but inexperienced gentleman farmer named Willard Daniels, who has inherited the town's largest house. To her husband's dismay, she quickly becomes the focus of rumor, fear, and contempt. Vienna is not simply a Northerner but a heroine of the Edith Wharton school—versed in the classics, and accustomed to mansions on the Hudson and conversations with British peers. Bored by the social niceties of Winsville society, Vienna shuns the mayor's wife in favor of intellectual pursuits; she is at work on an epic poem "meant to imitate Virgil in structure, Dante in scope, and Pope in tone." She interrupts her mental labors only for unacceptable activities like painting her barn lapis lazuli or bathing in the black people's swimming hole, and when she is forced to associate with the townsfolk she alienates them still further with her unconventionally direct conversation.

Winsville's rejection of Vienna leads to Willard's: "Like an exotic artifact from another land, removed from the culture that deemed it precious, Vienna lacked the one thing Willard needed to sustain his admiration: a consensus." He abandons his failing farm and his peculiar wife, leaving her—with one infant and another on the way—in the erratic care of his overbearing sister Augusta and two rebuffed suitors: the drunken doctor and a neighboring farmer, John Aimes.

Framed by the narrative of adolescent friendship between Aimes's son Addison and Vienna's daughter, Willa, the body of the novel concerns Vienna and her children, and the worlds of nature, literature, and the imagination which they inhabit. Elliott, Willa's frail younger brother, is a precocious naturalist, devoted to helping sick or injured animals and memorizing birdcalls. Vienna herself is committed to healing trees. And when love, magnificent and doomed, visits her, it is in the form of a gangly British botanist named Grayson Saunder, who spends his energies on "wispy renderings of weeds and pods, grasses and roots, annotating the pages with notes scripted in an ornate hand, as if his words, reflecting their subject, had sprouted lavish tendrils that curled competitively toward the margins."

Saunder's are not the only words that reflect their subject. If Vienna hails from the ladylike drawing rooms of old New York, so do the cadences in which she is described. The novel's rhythms are unabashedly mandarin and archaic, punctuated by verbal constructions that seem to mirror social constructions. Such sentences are at their finest (and wittiest) when their material most closely fits their form, as when Mosby writes of Vienna's early days in Winsville:

> She was, moreover, unfamiliar with the distinctions of hierarchy in a society in which most families had hanging laundry and wandering chickens behind the house. Her eyes had not yet learned to sort the various shades of gray in the monochrome of tawdriness with which she viewed all of Winsville, like a visitor to an exotic culture who finds all the natives equally uncivilized and does not know if the tribal chief is the one in the most or the fewest feathers.

Mosby, who is also a poet, writes equally well when she is describing the physical world: "The sun sifted through the dense foliage, casting spotlights of isolated attention: on the wide end of a mossy log, the churn of water folding over the sharp edge of a rock, and the iridescent sheen of a grackle's feather fallen in a clump of wild mint."

But whether providing social commentary or lyrical description, Mosby is committed, above all, to the sentence, a grammatical unit currently out of fashion. Among young contemporary novelists, there are those, densely poetic, whose allegiance is to the word; and those, ruthlessly of their time, whose focus is on the paragraph—even if, as often happens now, it is a single-sentence phenomenon. But exploiting the richness and elasticity of the sentence—and the authorial presence that such manipulation displays—is practically outré. In "Private Altars" Mosby appropriates and reworks an almost nineteenth-century form, capacious enough to allow for both a poetic style and an absorbing narrative.

Hers is a tremendously ambitious undertaking, and, impressive as it is, there are occasional lapses. The novel is burdened with passages of overwriting, moments of pretension, and instances of misjudged diction: "The dead trees, it was said, harbinged as certainly as hailstones in July the drought, pestilence, and eclipse of locusts that would follow if sufficient atonement was not made."

Still, such failings do not mar the book's over-all power. Nor does Mosby's approach prevent her from giving us something original—for, if the novel's form and setting evince earlier influences, its content and tone are contemporary. This is not a traditionally structured narrative; rather, it is a progression of incident and effect, drawing strength not from the relentless engine of plot but from the author's close observation and vividly realized scenes. Vienna, Willa, and, in particular, the little boy Elliott emerge whole and believable, in a world as concrete as it is literary. Mosby has combined the stylistic conventions of Wharton and James with the trappings of the Southern gothic, and while, individually, these American literary genres are all but exhausted, together they have produced a curiously vital hybrid. ◆

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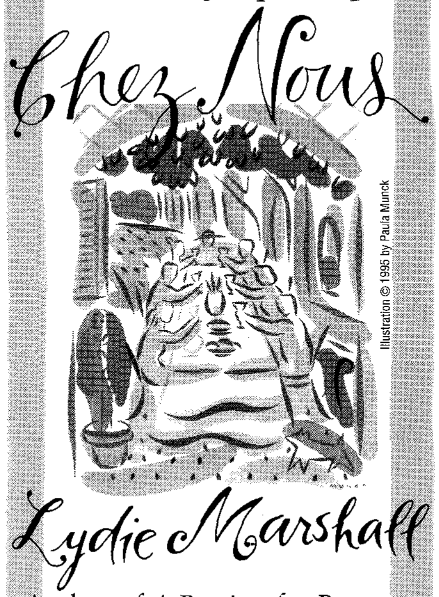

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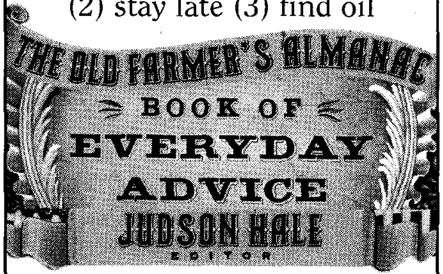

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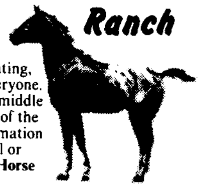

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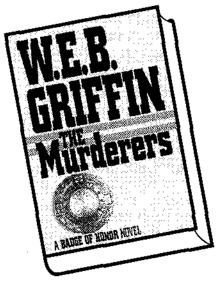

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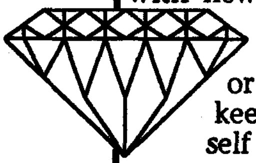

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The Invisible Circus

by Jennifer Egan
(Doubleday; $22.50)

"She'd missed it" is the first sentence of this novel, and that is how eighteen-year-old Phoebe, its central character, feels about everything. Growing up in San Francisco, she regarded the thrills of Haight-Ashbury as her birthright, but by 1978 the excitement is long gone. She habitually lets her friendships slide, she loves the fact that her widowed mother still frosts her hair, and she sleeps in the batik-draped bedroom of her charismatic older sister—who died on a hippie grand tour of Europe, eight years earlier. Phoebe is sprung from her trance when she replicates her sister's journey—a trip that takes the reader through stunning emotional terrain.

Edison: Inventing the Century

by Neil Baldwin
(Hyperion; $27.95)

Edison was a representative nineteenth-century man who transcended his era; his pattern of continuous, planned invention set the pattern for the twentieth century, in which the flow of innovation steadily creates new needs and rearranges society. Edison had a remarkable capacity to think little and big at the same time: while perfecting the electric light bulb, he conceived of a way to power an entire lighting network. Baldwin helps us appreciate Edison's scientific imagination and his tireless devotion to work while showing how these rare qualities became destructive in his personal life.

Modern Japanese Diaries

by Donald Keene
(Holt; $50)

This is an outstanding exploration of Japanese diaries written between 1860 and 1920—the years following Japan's emergence from two centuries of self-imposed isolation. The diarists present a very wide range of personalities and of experience—government officials, samurai, an explorer, a housewife, some poets and novelists, an anarchist. Almost all these people are good company, and Keene's command of style and tone is so subtle that each writer's voice preserves its individuality in the English translation.

The Annals of Chile

by Paul Muldoon
(Farrar, Straus & Giroux; $21)

Although the readers of Muldoon's new book of poems may occasionally wish for an Irish dictionary, they will probably be too quickly swept along by the great gouts of inventive, allusive language to much care. Show-offy, chatty, manic, these poems are all-inclusive, after the manner of Joyce and Beckett, and they have something of the deranged, omniscient tone of the masters as well.

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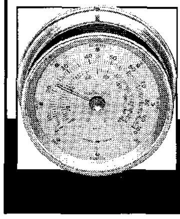

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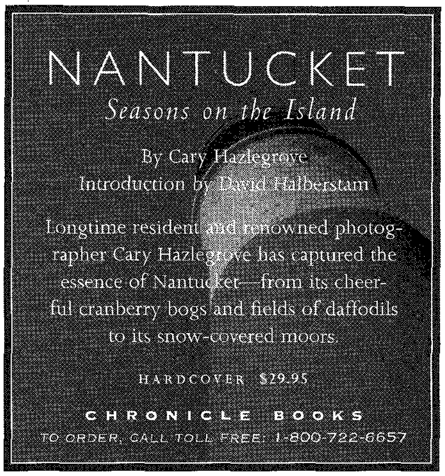

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Introduction by David Halberstam

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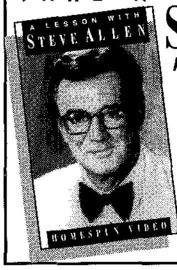

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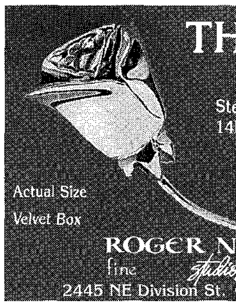

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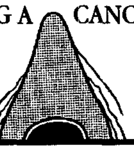

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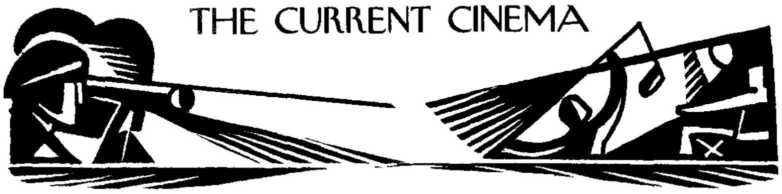
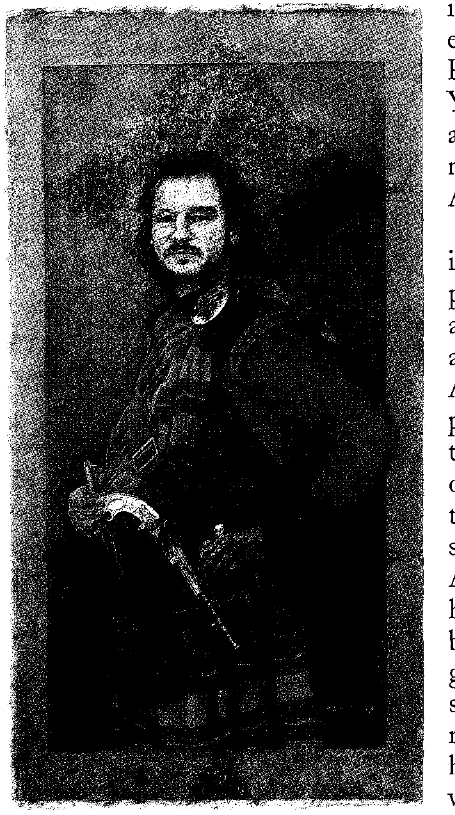


FUGITIVES

A swashbuckler set in Scotland and a Hal Hartley thriller.

BY TERRENCE RAFFERTY

THE hero of Michael Caton-Jones's "Rob Roy" is Robert MacGregor, a historical figure who has become, over the years, a legendary one—a sort of Scottish Robin Hood. The real Rob Roy was descended from chieftains of a fearsome clan. But by 1713, the year in which the movie's action takes place, the MacGregors are living like peasants, not warriors. Rob Roy (Liam Neeson) and his followers earn their keep as cattle drovers for a wealthy English landowner, the Marquis of Montrose (John Hurt); the old MacGregor fierceness manifests itself only when they're called upon to defend the Marquis's stock. What's appealing about Rob Roy is that, despite his humble circumstances, he still has the proud bearing of a king. He's a noble anachronism—a reminder of more colorful, less complicated times—and therefore an ideal hero for a romantic adventure story.



Liam Neeson, strapping but graceful as an action hero in a kilt.

PATRICK MILBORNE

Sir Walter Scott wrote a novel (also called "Rob Roy") about him in 1817; and Scott's contemporary Wordsworth composed the stirring ballad "Rob Roy's Grave," which portrayed the outlaw as a paragon of natural virtue. Scott described his hero as "blending the wild virtues, the subtle policy, and unrestrained license of an American Indian." Rob Roy is as much the archetype of a vanishing breed as Uncas and Chingachgook are in James Fenimore Cooper's "The Last of the Mohicans," and his story is essentially an end-of-the-frontier saga, with the lakes and hills of the Scottish Highlands standing in for the dense forests of Cooper's pre-Revolutionary New York and the canyons and prairies of the nineteenth-century American West.

It's always rousing to watch a strong, principled man of action hold the line against history. In Alan Sharp's screenplay, Rob, pushed too far by the devious Montrose and the Marquis's loathsome henchman, Archibald Cunningham (Tim Roth), becomes a kind of guerrilla, pitting his simple and incorruptible sense of honor against the wiles of his civilized—English—oppressors. He's a real man at war with artful fops; the peruked villains don't stand a chance. Rob's virile integrity seems to spring right out of the harshly beautiful landscape, and so does the womanly ferocity of his wife, Mary (Jessica Lange); her feet are planted as firmly on the Scottish earth as his are, and, together, this husband and wife mount a formidable defense of the MacGregor turf—they're a mythic power couple.

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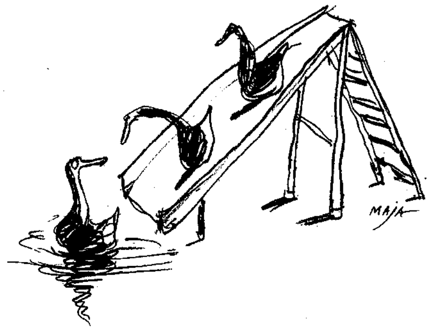
spective sexes than Liam Neeson and Jessica Lange. Neeson is strapping but graceful, and he uses his soft eyes and his soothing voice skillfully; he manages the difficult feat of embodying primitive masculinity without seeming coarse or brutish. Lange's acting style is, like Neeson's, spare, direct, and eloquent; their scenes together are striking evocations of the mature intimacies of a long, loyal marriage. And this role doesn't require Lange to repress her sensuality, as she did in the dull heartland drama "Country" (1984); there's no doubt that the bond between Mary and Rob is largely sexual, and their unembarrassed physical passion is part of what makes their relationship so moving.

"Rob Roy" is actually more effective as a conjugal-love story than as a ripping yarn. The action set pieces—the chases, the duels, the ambushes, the escapes—have a curiously muted quality; they're rarely as thrilling as we want them to be. And the movie's pace is stately. Caton-Jones, whose previous films include "Scandal" and "This Boy's Life," is a tasteful, intelligent director, which is to say that this sort of story doesn't suit his talents very well. Historical romances need to be stark, swift, and visually bold (like Michael Mann's shamelessly entertaining film of "The Last of the Mohicans"). And folk legends don't allow much leeway for emotional complexity. It's no use trying to impose a contemplative rhythm on a straightforward tale of good and evil; there just isn't enough to contemplate.

The perennial attraction of semi-barbaric outlaw figures like Rob Roy is that their instinctual defiance of the march of social progress taps into a universal ambivalence about the value of civilization—a gnawing suspicion that we may have sacrificed too much natural vigor for the sake of comfort and order. This movie, in a strange way, reflects that uncertainty. The filmmakers never decide whether they want to stimulate us with the primitive pleasures of action and violence or to impress us with the genteel trappings of literate, thoughtful human drama, and they settle for an uneasy compromise: "Rob Roy" straddles the line between swashbuckler and prestige picture. Caton-Jones allows Hurt and Roth to compete with each other in portraying old-movie-style dastardliness, and it's a duel to the death: curled lips at twenty paces. (Roth wins.) At the same time, the movie plays down the hero's capacity for savagery, as if it were afraid to unleash a force that might be a little too elemental for a contemporary audience. And "Rob Roy" even treats the ravishing Highlands setting in a rather gingerly fashion. The cinematography, by Karl Walter Lindenlaub, gives the landscapes a subdued, overcast look; in this picture, Scotland hides its charms in a drab frock and refuses to seduce us.

At one point, "Rob Roy" cuts back and forth between a deadly ambush in a forest and a warm gathering at the MacGregor encampment, and this elaborate sequence is a clear illustration of the movie's schizophrenia. The ambush generates the film's most vivid images—of horses streaking through mist-shrouded trees—yet we see them only in near-subliminal flashes, since Caton-Jones keeps interrupting them with shots of the cozy campfire scene, in which a young woman sings a sad, pretty tune and the MacGregors dance and snuggle. It's as if the film were deliberately shying away from its true nature—perversely denying us the visual sensations we crave. Although "Rob Roy" is an agreeable picture, it's too discreet—too civilized—to stir the viewer's blood. The movie's heart is in the right place, but its eye isn't.

"AMATEUR" is the fourth feature by the idiosyncratic Long Island-bred writer and director Hal Hartley, who made his reputation with a couple of deadpan romantic comedies—"The Unbelievable Truth" (1990) and "Trust" (1991)—about young suburbanites bent on reinventing themselves. In his third picture, "Simple Men" (1992), Hartley seemed stuck in a rut; the movie ran out of gas early, and got nowhere. "Amateur," which is set in Manhattan and Westchester, gives us a livelier ride. Thomas (Martin Donovan), the hero of the new film, is an amnesiac: in the first scene, he wakes up in an alley, cut, bruised, and bewildered. He drifts into a coffee shop and strikes up a conversation with a solemn-looking Frenchwoman named Isabelle (Isabelle Huppert), who is sitting at the counter composing pornographic fiction on a laptop. They hit it off immediately, and Isabelle takes the dazed wanderer back to her apartment, giving him sanctuary from whatever it is that's pursuing him.



Like all Hartley's protagonists, they both turn out to be running from themselves—from identities that have let them down. Isabelle, we learn, has spent fifteen years in a convent, feeling all the while that she was living a lie; she believes, although she has never had sex, that she's a nymphomaniac. Thomas's background takes longer to emerge. The mystery of his past moves the story along for about half the picture, and when the pieces come together we discover that we're in a sort of thriller—and a very peculiar sort, at that. Thomas, it seems, was a successful producer of blue movies starring his young wife, Sofia (Elina Lowensohn); according to Sofia, he was a tyrannical, abusive husband, imprisoning her in a life she hated. All three characters, plus an eccentric accountant named Edward (Damian Young), spend the rest of the movie on the lam from a sinister European arms merchant.

Hartley is obviously not interested in making a conventional thriller. The plot is pointedly silly, and Hartley puts ironic Godardian quotation marks around the violence. The antic suspense-movie motifs serve a purpose, though: they make Hartley's familiar obsessions look shinier and fresher, and restore the dramatic urgency that was missing from "Simple Men." "Amateur" occasionally lapses into arty self-consciousness. (At times, Hartley's European-cinéaste manner feels a little desperate, like Isabelle's failed impersonation of a nymphomaniac.) But Huppert's delicate, surprisingly witty performance keeps the movie grounded in recognizable human emotions, and the director finds a good deal of comic resonance in the hero's amnesia. It's a perfect way for Hartley to explore his pet theme: the impulse to jettison the past and start over as someone else. In this filmmaker's world, waking up not knowing who you are is a blessing—even a miracle. It beats waking up on Long Island, anyway. ♦

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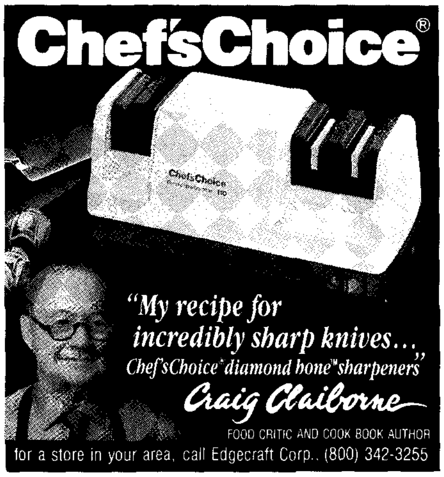

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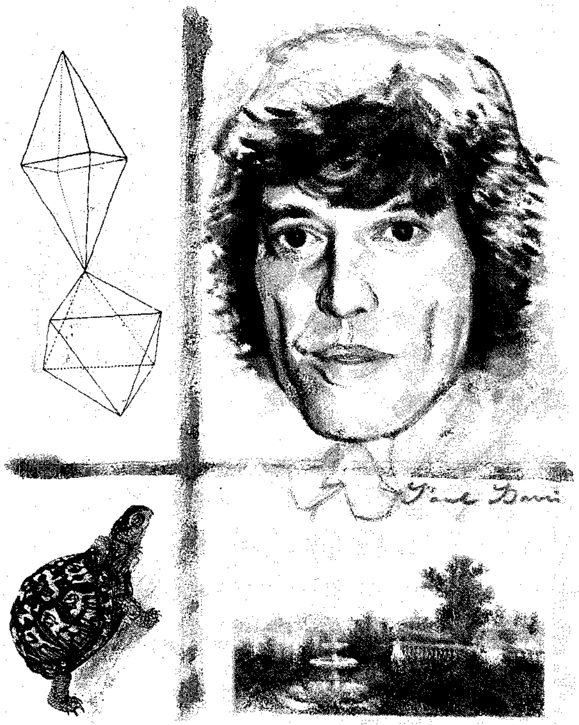
BLOWING HOT AND COLD

Chaos meets history in a brilliant new play.

BY JOHN LAHR

In Tom Stoppard's 1966 novel, "Lord Malquist and Mr. Moon," Malquist remarks, "Since we cannot hope for order, let us withdraw with style from the chaos." This notion has made Stoppard a very rich man. He says that his favorite line in modern English drama is from Christopher Hampton's "The Philanthropist": "I'm a man of no convictions—at least, I *think* I am." Over the years, in twenty-one plays, Stoppard has turned his spectacular neutrality into a high-wire act of doubt. "I write plays because dialogue is the most respectable way of contradicting myself," he once explained. The three-ring circus of Stoppard's mind pulls them in at the box office, where news of the intellect, as opposed to the emotions, is a rarity. Marvel at his marriage of Beckett and Shakespeare in the death-defying clown act of "Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead" (1967). Watch him play with logical positivism and the meaning of God in "Jumpers" (1972). See him juggle Oscar Wilde, James Joyce, and Lenin in "Travesties" (1974). Stoppard's mental acrobatics flatter an audience's intelligence and camouflage the avowed limits of his plotting and his heart.

In "Arcadia," at the Vivian Beaumont—to my mind, his best play so far—Stoppard is serving up another intellectual stew (the recipe includes "a seasoning of chaos and a pinch of thermodynamics following a dash of quantum mechanics," he says), but with a difference. Stoppard, whose stock-in-trade is parody, which is skepticism in cap and bells, has found a metaphor that takes him beyond parody to vision. Here, despite some casting glitches, Trevor Nunn's elegant production pits the heart against the head in a subtle theatrical equation, which factors out into a moving ambiguity.



Stoppard's science: academic flimflammery, the pull of sexuality, and the play of knowledge.

PAUL DAVIS

The play begins and ends with an image of Eden before the Fall. In this lush, tranquil landscape, painted onto a curtain, lit from behind, that wraps around the thrust stage like a kind of illuminated lampshade, no animals and no fear intrude on perfect pastoral harmony as Eve holds out to Adam the Apple of Knowledge. Only scudding gray clouds in the background suggest the confusion about to beset mankind once Adam takes a bite. The consequence of curiosity, once the curtain goes up, is a vaudeville of consciousness in a fallen world. “Septimus, what is carnal embrace?” the thirteen-year-old math brain truster Thomasina Coverly (the pert Jennifer Dundas) asks her handsome tutor, Septimus Hodge, in the play’s first line. The question mirrors the image of Paradise about to be lost, and Stoppard’s play goes on to answer her question. To embrace the flesh is also to embrace all the sins that the flesh is heir to—the sins to which Stoppard’s labyrinthine plot, whose ingenious twists and turns involve greed, rapacity, vainglory, skulduggery, cruelty, delusion, confusion, and genius, bears ample witness.

THE brilliance of “Arcadia” is not so much in the wordplay as it is in the construction. Stoppard has built his story along two time lines: life at Sidley Park, the Coverlys’ country house in Derbyshire, in 1809, and life at present in the same house, where a couple of academics are picking over the bric-a-brac of Coverly family history. The action is set in a high-ceilinged room of grand Georgian design, which is dominated by a large oblong table cluttered with books, implements of learning, and a dozy pet turtle. A fissure in the cupola of Mark Thompson’s shrewdly designed interior is the only physical hint of the skewing of world views that takes place around the table as the play shuttles back and forth in a nanosecond between centuries. (Actors in one time frame exit as actors from the other enter.) By cross-cutting the Coverly family story and the story of the contemporaries trying to reconstruct it, Stoppard utilizes the ironies of history—the symmetries and accidents that lead, nonetheless, to a kind of order—as a way of demonstrating the outcome of chaos theory; that is, as the program note explains to us scientific simpletons, how reality “can be both deterministic and unpredictable.” This is an enormous theatrical feat—a kind of intellectual mystery story—in which Stoppard provides the audience with the exhilarating illusion of omniscience. We become cosmic detectives, outside time, solving the riddle of history from the clues and connections that we see but the characters, who are caught in time, do not. For instance, the equation that Thomasina works out to explain the asymmetry of a leaf, her “New Geometry of Irregular Forms,” later turns out, with the help of computers, to undo the assumptions of Newtonian physics. She is to classical mathematics what Picasso is to art history. The spirited youngster, who shouts “Phooey to Death!” in the first scene, works out a formula that, by the last scene, prophesies the ultimate doom of the universe, which is collapsing like a chocolate soufflé from the slow loss of heat. Even Thomasina’s offhand doodle on the landscape architect’s plans for a Gothic vista at Sidley Park—she sketches a hermit to inhabit the planned Romantic hermitage—turns out to have been a prophecy of Septimus Hodge’s destiny. The caprices of history, like the accidents that become inevitabilities in a plot, are the charms of chance that Stoppard and the audience stand in awe of.

Life’s terrifying randomness is a mystery that compels mankind to impose order. Chaos is psychologically intolerable; man’s need for coherence is greater than his need for truth. Landscape, like ritual, is consoling because it holds the magical promise of permanence. “English landscape was invented by gardeners imitating foreign painters who were evoking classical authors,” says Hannah Jarvis (Blair Brown), a modern who is writing a book about the Sidley Park hermitage and the garden. The imaginative ideal is made into a reality; and Stoppard contrives to dramatize a moment in the life of the estate when the old illusion of reality is being adapted to fit a new one. At Sidley Park, Nature was originally tamed according to a neoclassical symmetry. The projected Romantic version, for which Stoppard supplies fascinating visual aids, is a triumph of the picturesque over the well proportioned. The planned irregularity and “naturalness” of the reimagined landscape capture the nineteenth-century drift toward Romantic individualism: from formality to spontaneity, from aristocratic public space to middle-class privacy, from the balance that reflects the Enlightenment’s God of Reason to the brooding Romantic freedom that makes a god of the self. “The decline from thinking to feeling, you see,” Hannah says. No wonder Septimus (Billy Crudup, making a persuasive Broadway début) refers to the landscape architect who engineers the loss of this particular version of Paradise as the Devil. “In the scheme of the garden he is as the serpent,” Septimus says. The wildness of the picturesque style is an attempt to contain chaos by building the unpredictable into the landscape, just as Thomasina, in her algebraic equation, is unwittingly introducing chaos into the physical laws of life.

Meanwhile, the lives and loves of these citizens take their apparently ordinary lustful course. The philandering Septimus cunningly evades a duel with the cuckolded poet Ezra Chater (Paul Giamatti), who enters in fury and exits in flattery, inscribing Hodge’s copy of his poem “The Couch of Eros,” after the tutor, lying, promises to review it favorably. “Did Mrs. Chater know of this before she—before you—” Chater sputters, seeing his wife’s infidelity not as a leg over for her but as a leg up the literary ladder for him. Septimus encourages this delusion, and Chater is triumphant. “There is nothing that woman would not do for me,” he crows, thereby illustrating Stoppard’s larger theme—that people will rationalize anything to avoid chaos.

The compulsion for coherence has its comic apotheosis in the biographical sleuthing of Bernard Nightingale, a don from Sussex University who is a whirlwind of spurious intellectual connections. Nightingale (played with swaggering and hilarious arrogance by Victor Garber) has stumbled on the copy of Chater’s “The Couch of Eros” that contains both the poet’s inscription and an unnamed challenge to a duel, and he has traced the volume to Byron’s library. A literary climber of the first order, Nightingale sniffs a mother lode of lit-crit kudos in making the connection between Byron and Chater. No one is better at this kind of academic flimflammery than Stoppard, and he has a good time teasing the literary second-guessing that too often passes for biography. Within minutes of insinuating himself into Sidley Park, and Hannah’s orbit, Nightingale is spinning his academic wheels and turning what we know to be Septimus’s face-saving deceit into a sensational case of adultery, literary infighting, and the death of Chater in a duel with Byron after the latter poet’s devastating review of Chater’s work appears in *Piccadilly Recreation*. “Without question, Ezra Chater issued a challenge to *somebody*," Nightingale says, reading from his completed paper in the tour-de-force opening of Act II. "Without question, Lord Byron, in the very season of his emergence as a literary figure, quit the country in a cloud of panic and mystery, and stayed abroad for two years at a time when Continental travel was unusual and dangerous. If we seek his reason—*do we need to look far*?" Hellbent on literary glory, Nightingale rushes past the truth—"Is it likely that the man Chater calls his friend Septimus Hodge is the same man who screwed his wife and kicked the shit out of his last book?" The paper is proof positive of the cynic's adage that "history is something that never happened written by someone who was never there."

"ARCADIA" uses intellectual argument as a kind of riptide to pull the audience under the playful surface of romance with which the characters in both time frames fill their days and nights. In "Arcadia" 's comic conceit, seismic intellectual shifts are treated as superficial, while superficial changes of the heart are treated as monumental. For the evening to work, the audience must feel the pull of sexuality as well as the play of knowledge. In London, with Felicity Kendal, Emma Fielding, and Harriet Walter in the major female roles, the erotic amperage was high; here, though, the American actresses can articulate the words but not the sexy twinkle beneath them. As Hannah, Blair Brown shows a sharp intelligence, but she can't give Stoppard's lines that nervy bluestocking spin which flirts with learning and turns the alarming into the charming. "Oh, shut up," she tells Nightingale, when he is upbraiding her after discovering she has written a letter to the London *Times* giving the facts of Chater's death. (He was killed by a monkey bite in Martinique after discovering the dwarf dahlia.) "It'll be very short, very dry, absolutely gloat-free," she says of her letter. "Would you rather it were one of your friends?" The strut of Stoppard's epigrams is also missed by Lisa Banes as Lady Croom, who delivers some of the most delightful *mots* without the louche aristocratic aura of entitlement that makes them properly pay off. "Do not dabble in paradox," she says to Captain Brice (David Manis). "It puts you in danger of fortuitous wit." Even the pint-size Jennifer Dundas, who has the smarts to make Thomasina a credible, if cloying, prodigy, hasn't the stature to make her a compelling object of desire. The cumulative effect is not to undermine the production but to dim it.

Still, the brilliance of Stoppard's metaphor shines through. In the final scene, Thomasina is horsing around with her brother when Septimus enters with her latest diagrams under his arm. "Order, order!" Septimus shouts to his rambunctious pupil, now nearly seventeen years old, who would rather waltz than work. By the end of the scene, when Septimus comprehends her latest equation, he sees that order—the Enlightenment notion of it—has entirely collapsed. Now the time frames merge, with the characters in the present overlapping with and commenting on the issues raised by characters in the past. "It's a diagram of heat exchange," says Valentine Coverly, a graduate student of mathematics (played expertly by Robert Sean Leonard), looking at the same diagrams that Septimus is studying. Septimus looks up. "So, we are all doomed," he says. "Yes," Thomasina answers cheerfully, not knowing that she is soon to become another integer in her equation of chaos. (She will perish the same night in a fire; and Septimus will become the hermit of Sidley Park, speaking to no one except his pet turtle.) But for the moment, with the geometry of the universe's doom in his hand, Septimus says, "When we have found all the mysteries and lost all the meaning, we will be alone, on an empty shore."

At the prospect of such an awesome, godless void, Thomasina suggests that they dance, and finally gets Septimus to his feet. The audience knows the outcome but the dancers don't: they live in the comedy of the moment, not in the tragedy of history. Hannah waltzes with Gus Coverly (John Griffin), a smitten teen-ager who has given her the final piece of the puzzle of Septimus's story. Together, the couples whirl around the old table covered with the inventory of centuries of learning. The ravishing image moves the play, in its last beats, from story to statement. The dance becomes the dance of time: one awkward, one graceful; one in celebration, one in resignation. The waltz, an act of grace in the face of gloom, is a perfect embodiment of Stoppard's spiritual standoff. Playwriting, like the dancing, is a way of giving off heat in a cooling universe: an assertion and an abdication at the same time. It's the dance of a stoic, and, from where I sit, it is brave and very beautiful. ♦

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MUSICAL EVENTS

STOPS AND STARTS

Jonathan Miller's new "Pelléas" at the Met.

BY PAUL GRIFFITHS

THAT it's not impossible to present Debussy's "Pelléas et Mélisande" in a huge theatre is proved by some few things that go right in the Met's new production. One of the gleams in a sad fog of misdirection and imprecision is the general audibility of the words. The singers—all North Americans except for one Briton—enunciate with the syllable-by-syllable clarity of people speaking a foreign language, so that not only are the words heard but they're heard as strange, which is apt. The syntax of Maeterlinck's play is elementary: the characters speak a kind of high-school French, as if there might be some other language in which they would be able to express themselves more freely. Debussy's discovery was that this other language could be music.

Jealousy and command: Victor Braun as Golaud and Frederica von Stade as Mélisande.

MAX MILLER

At the Met, the music isn't swamped by the scale of the place: on the contrary, the orchestra, under James Levine, often sounds too loud—especially the timpani in the interlude leading up to the scene where Golaud is in his sickbed. This is one passage where, not too surprisingly, Mr. Levine enjoys finding how much Debussy learned from "Parsifal." The wounded Golaud becomes a cousin of the wounded Amfortas, and later, in the big interlude after Golaud's violent attack on Mélisande and the ancient Arkel's impotent pity, the weight and the march rhythm of Mr. Levine's performance point to a kinship with the transformation sequences that lead in Wagner's opera to the Grail chapel. This mighty adagio, as Mr. Levine makes it, also takes on a function like that of the D-minor interlude in "Wozzeck": what rears up from the pit is music's power, but also music's powerlessness to help the people onstage. The moment can't quite be spoiled by the busy scene change at this point: Mr. Levine touches magnificence. However, Debussy's music is more commonly that of a man who can change his mind every quarter of a second, and Mr. Levine, in his grand design, is often nonplussed. I've never before heard a "Pelléas" that so obviously just kept stopping dead. The music of silence is not what this conductor is about.

Nor is it very much what his cast is about. Frederica von Stade's Mélisande was always firmly human; maturity has only increased her tendency to plant the character in a low register of rich tone and expressive fullness. Yet she commands ambiguity. In the tower song, which was her triumph at the opening performance, she started as if singing out of a sob in that warm and distinctive mezzo reach of hers, but then one began to feel that the sob might be a chuckle. This was moving and excellent: Debussy's world is one in which, as he said of the effect of his Sonata for Flute, Viola, and Harp, one doesn't know whether to laugh or to cry, and it's good to have a Mélisande who can display her dislocation by simultaneously and full-heartedly doing both. What's questionable is her occasional exaggeration when the emotion is simpler, as in her line "Je ne suis pas heureuse," in the middle of the second act. This isn't someone bewailing her misfortune; this is someone tentatively beginning to understand what unhappiness might feel like.

Even Ms. von Stade's most defiant directness, though, is exceeded by that of Victor Braun as Golaud. To a degree, this is just. Golaud is a blunt man surrounded by people who are disengaged; hence the drama. But his bluntness is all there in his music; he doesn't have to rage into the line, as Mr. Braun does, and virtually speak or shout whole phrases, suggesting a man who seems to be expressing impatience with, not through, what he has to sing. One can't fail to be touched by Mr. Braun's portrait of jealous frenzy, suspicion, and grief. But he's wrong. And because he comes to a climax of fury in the second act, rather than in the fourth, he raises the unnecessary question of why Golaud's behavior should suddenly be so sinisterly calm when, early in the third act, he discovers Pelléas wrapped in Mélisande's tresses.

The Met's Pelléas is also a man of solid emotional substance, but it's by virtue of the tessitura and the type of his singing voice. Debussy wrote the part for a high baritone, and it sounds good on a tenor: the Pelléas I go on hearing in my head is George Shirley, who could bring a tenor's brightness to the occasional high-lying phrase ("Ce sont les autres phares," for instance), as if for most of the time he were inhibited by shyness, or as if his voice would intermittently, like an adolescent boy's, skid out of control. Dwayne Croft, a chestnut baritone, is no adolescent. He makes Pelléas sound not so distant in color and range from Golaud—if far distant from this Golaud in his consistent nobility of tone, roundness of delivery, and musicality of phrasing. Where Mélisande's choice is normally between the conventional Golaud and the volatile Pelléas, here the action is turned around, and Pelléas is a rather proper young man who falls victim to Golaud's primitive urges.

WHETHER this is by accident or design on the part of the director, Jonathan Miller, is a moot point. Mr. Miller has asked us to see the opera as having a link with French novels of the period—Proust, "Le Grand Meaulnes"—though the look of his production is, especially where Clare Mitchell's costumes are concerned, more Merchant-Ivory than Alain-Fournier. Sorry, but I just can't see Mélisande in one of those wide Edwardian hats; nor does Ms. von Stade look happy so bedecked. Also regrettable is the decision to flesh out the social background. Pelléas's father is one of the great characters in opera exactly because he's never seen: it's his absence that puts a question mark after every sentence in the text, because we have to ask how things would be differently spoken, differently felt, differently done were he around. Mr. Miller wheels him on in an invalid chair. We also get to see Yniold's nurse, a couple of gardeners, a butler, a footman, and various maids, all long before the finale, where servants are supposed to appear and, by their silent appearance, mark Mélisande's and the opera's passing. It's a foolish trend in this opera to use supernumeraries (Peter Sellars did it, too, in his Amsterdam–Los Angeles production) when the issues of who's onstage and who's not singing are crucial.

Not so foolish is the transfer of the action to the period when the opera was composed, though the device is by now a bit commonplace, and certainly it's been better done—notably by Harry Kupfer, in a London production more than a decade ago, and by Peter Brook, in the drawing-room containment of the piece he created in Paris in 1992. By comparison with those predecessors, Mr. Miller's vision is tepid. There's too much dithering, in place of strong gestures that could really communicate indecisiveness. When the characters do actually do something, they banally replicate the text: Mélisande's hand wanders to her head at the thought of her lost crown, and what's potentially mysterious crashes to the ground as mundane. The one good visual idea is the gradual reassembly of the high beige walls of John Conklin's set. At first, they're astray, with little architectural logic, and with the possibility of a tree in what might be a room. But as they rotate for each new scene an order begins to assert itself, sufficiently to make a propped-up ruin or a construction site (it's nicely unclear which) for the scene in which Golaud threatens Pelléas in the castle vaults, a comfortable salon in the next act, and a completely rational bedchamber for the finale. The opera is drawn inexorably into normality, which is death.

This production also follows what's become common practice, in casting a boy as Yniold, and, good and true though Gregory Rodriguez is, nobody should have expected him to cope with singing in a theatre of this size. The tail end of his solo scene disappears under the orchestra, though this charming suspension of the tragedy has already been thoroughly throttled by Mr. Miller, who has Yniold sing it from bed. For heaven's sake, the drama isn't in the dreamer but in the dream: the boulder the boy can't lift, the passing sheep and shepherd, the way he skips off "to tell somebody something." Bringing Yniold on in other scenes as silent witness, too, works less well on this stage, deeply shadowed, than it did in the clear intimacy of Mr. Brook's version.

Robert Lloyd, as Arkel, was worryingly off the note and muffled (by his beard?) in his first scene, but then came more into focus. Marilyn Horne, as Geneviève, was there right from the start, as this character has to be, since she vanishes after the first act. Ms. Horne made her letter recitation a masterpiece of experience, authority, and musical intelligence, bolstered by bottom notes that now have an almost Heldentenor strength. This is a wonderful part for an old trouper—perhaps one for Ms. von Stade in the next Met production, which is now an urgent hope. ♦

SHOUTS & MURMURS

THE NEW DEAF

BY BENJAMIN CHEEVER

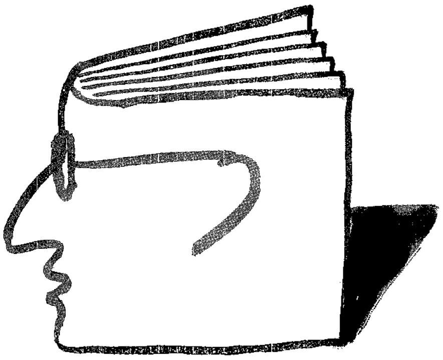
WHEN I was a kid, the extent of the family's spoken-word recordings was an L.P. of Mel Brooks and Carl Reiner's "The 2,000 Year Old Man" and one scritchy-scratchy old album of Dylan Thomas reading "A Child's Christmas in Wales" on one side and "Fern Hill" on the other. In those days, if you wanted something read aloud you had to find an actual person to do it for you. In my particular family there were a lot of such persons about. My father used to read to us from works in progress. He'd come down in the middle of the day, shell-shocked, with a fistful of yellow typing paper. "Would you mind terribly?" he'd ask.

My mother usually read us our bedtime stories. She has an enchanting voice, which sounds exactly as if she were holding a couple of stones in her mouth. My little brother loved our paperback version of "Born Free," and being tenderhearted she would skip the epilogue, where the lioness dies. "One night, after I'd put Fred to bed I heard him crying," she recalls. "And I knew that he'd taught himself to read."

Once I was out in the real world, I missed the voices of my family. I took a job at a newspaper, and sat next to the police scanner. Not the same thing. In desperation, I bought a cheap tape recorder, read my favorite Frost poems into it, and played the tape back to myself as I drove to work. The van I then owned was noisy, and had a standard shift. In order to hear Frost, I had to hold the tape recorder to my ear. I couldn't listen to poetry and smoke at the same time.

It's no wonder, then, that I've been watching the growth of the recorded-books industry with delight. While working at *Reader's Digest*, I served on a committee that looked into the industry, and I've now been through thousands of tapes. First I listened to the books I had always meant to read, then to the ones I had adored but had never got back to. These days, I use the cassette player in my car, but I also own a Walkman, so that I can listen to a book while I run, rinse the dishes, make coffee, or shave. My wife refers to me as "one of the new deaf," because I move around the house looking absent-minded with a Sony in my pocket and a novel in my head.

A VARIETY of companies are feeding a growing market for audio books. Some, like Books on Tape, Inc., in Newport Beach, California, or Recorded Books, Inc., in Prince Frederick, Maryland, will rent unabridged recordings of just about anything that can be read aloud. Other, smaller firms have particular tastes. Blackstone Audio Books, of Ashland, Oregon, offers titles that make no concessions to marketing wisdom—Dante's "Inferno," and Gibbon's "Decline and Fall" on eighty-six one-and-a-half-hour cassettes. Second Renaissance Books, in New Milford, Connecticut, has just about everything Ayn Rand ever wrote, and no rebuttals. And there is a sleazy element in the industry—dozens of tapes that promise to make you thin and rich through subliminal suggestion. I once bought one of these, hoping to find a *Digest* article to excerpt. What I got was the sound of breaking surf and a little voice under the surf chirping, "I am rich, I am thin. I am rich, I am thin." This is not the only type of audio fraud. The Brookstone catalogue has an ad for "The World's 100 Greatest Books" audiocassette collection, at $265:



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Although I've yet to hear a great work of literature distilled to its essence in forty-five minutes, I did once listen to the Teaching Company's fifty-seven-lecture course on the history of Western philosophy. While I may not have been substantially improved by it, I was certainly entertained. And I am no more smug than I was before I took the course.

Diana Trilling lost the better part of her vision ten years ago, and in a recent article in *Civilization* about her dependence on audio renditions of books she cites an account of the first time St. Augustine watched St. Ambrose reading silently to himself. " 'His eyes scanned the page, and his mind penetrated its meaning,' St. Augustine reported incredulously, 'but his voice and tongue were silent.' " Mrs. Trilling writes that most contemporary readers skip over the unnecessary words, and so find it somewhat tiresome to have a text read to them. I don't feel this way. I still read just as Augustine must have done—slowly, and as if each new word were strange to me. ♦

MICHAEL CRAWFORD

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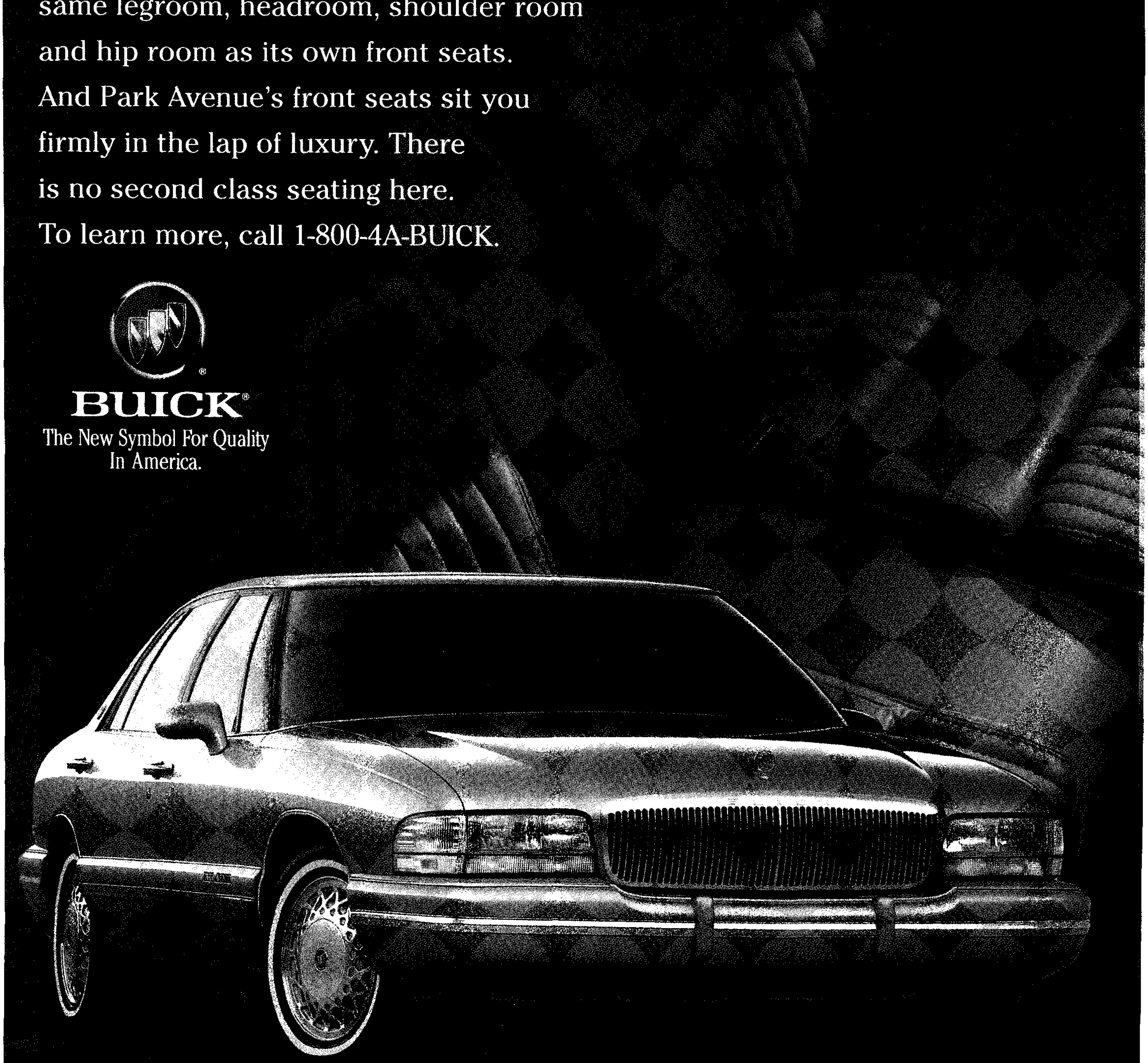

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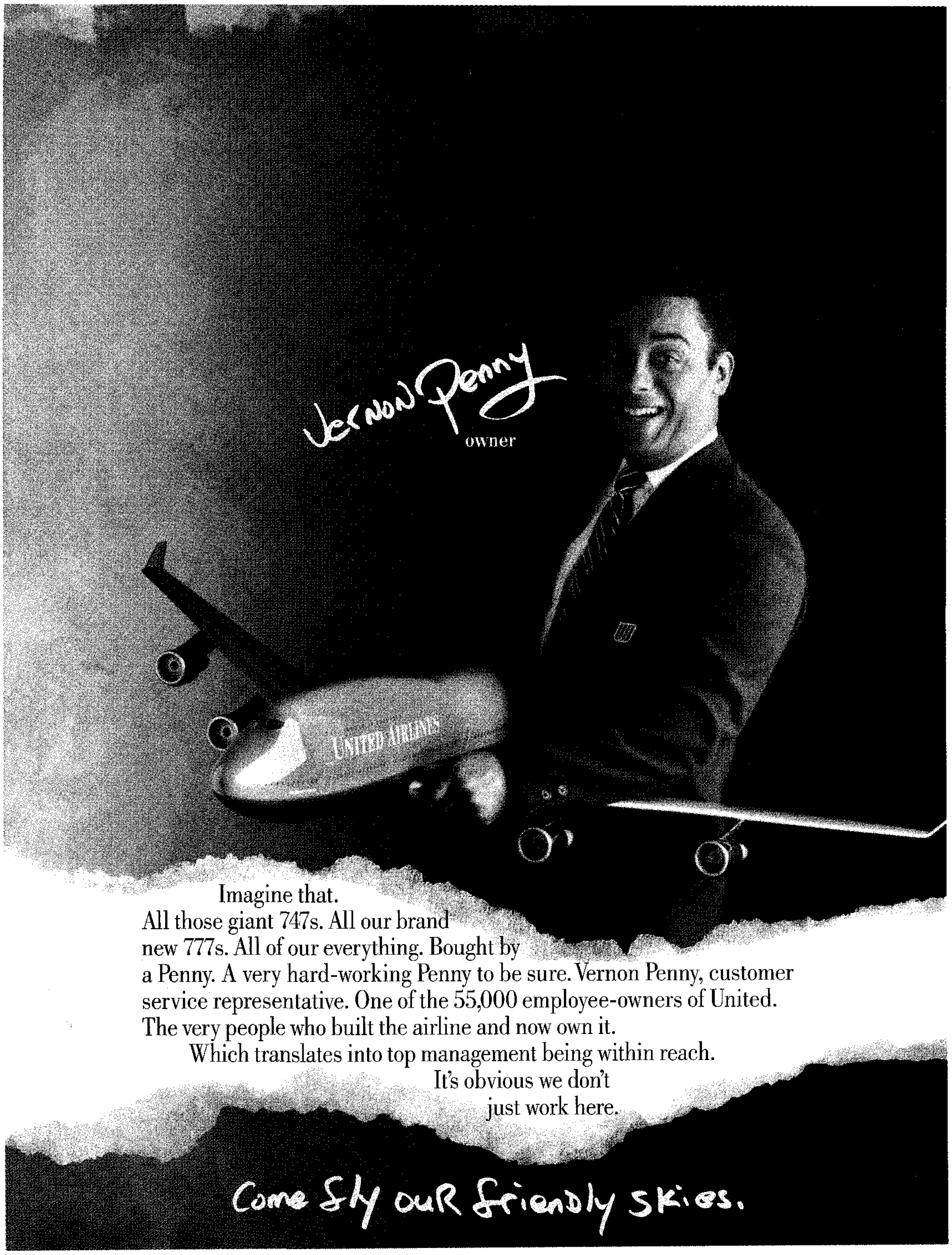

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